

---

# **STATE OF ARIZONA ESEA FLEXIBILITY REQUEST**

---



**July 13, 2012  
(Amended August 28, 2013;  
Amended May 21, 2014)**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Insert page numbers prior to submitting the request, and place the table of contents in front of the SEA's flexibility request.

CONTENTS		PAGE
Cover Sheet for ESEA Flexibility Request – <a href="#">see Renewal Form</a>		<del>4</del> 4
Waivers- <a href="#">see Renewal Form</a>		<del>5-7</del> 5-7
Assurances – <a href="#">see Renewal Form</a>		<del>8-9</del> 8-9
Consultation		<del>10</del> 11-18
Evaluation		<del>46</del> 19
Overview of SEA's Request for the ESEA Flexibility		<del>17-18</del> 20-22
<b>Principle 1: College- and Career-Ready Expectations for All Students</b>		<del>19-36</del> 23-53
1.A	Adopt college- and career-ready standards	<del>49</del> 23
1.B	Transition to college- and career-ready standards	<del>19-36</del> 24-48
1.C	Develop and administer annual, statewide, aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth	<del>37</del> 49-53
<b>Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support</b>		<del>38-148</del> 54-212
2.A	Develop and implement a State-based system of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support	<del>38-60</del> 54-134
2.B	Set ambitious but achievable annual measurable objectives	<del>61-64</del> 135-139
2.C	Reward Schools	<del>65-67</del> 139-141
2.D	Priority Schools	<del>67-89</del> 141-160
2.E	Focus Schools <a href="#">Deleted Table 2 is pages 169-178</a>	<del>90-117</del> 161-168
2.F	Provide incentives and supports for other Title I schools	<del>117-131</del> 179-190
2.G	Build SEA, LEA, and school capacity to improve student learning	<del>132-151</del> 191-212
<b>Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership</b>		<del>152-175</del> 213-239
3.A	Develop and adopt guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems	<del>152-168</del> 213-231
3.B	Ensure LEAs implement teacher and principal evaluation and support systems	<del>168-175</del> 232-239
<b>Principle 4: Reducing Duplication and Unnecessary Burden</b>		<del>176-178</del> 240-243

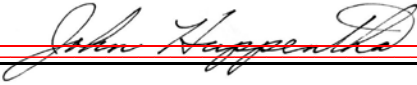
**TABLE OF CONTENTS, CONTINUED**

For each attachment included in the *ESEA Flexibility Request*, label the attachment with the corresponding number from the list of attachments below and indicate the page number where the attachment is located. If an attachment is not applicable to the SEA's request, indicate "N/A" instead of a page number. Reference relevant attachments in the narrative portions of the request.

<b>LABEL</b>	<b>LIST OF ATTACHMENTS</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
Assurance 11-1	Notice to LEAs	<del>479-484</del>
Assurance 11-2	Comments on request received from LEAs (if applicable)	<del>N/A</del>
Assurance 11-3	Notice and information provided to the public regarding the request	<del>485-487</del>
Attachment 1A	AZCCRS-statewide-implementation-plan	25
Attachment 1AA	adopted-essential-assessment-values-6mar14	34,47
Attachment 1B	Professional Development Phases	25
Attachment 1C	considerations-for-implementation-of-azccrs	26
Attachment 1D	detailed-azccrs-str-plan-3-18-14	26
Attachment 1E	Declaration of Curricular and Instructional Alignment webpage	26
Attachment 1F	College and Career Readiness ASU Focus Group results	26
Attachment 1G	Attachment 1G Tribal Leader Mtg. Invite(2)	26
Attachment 1H	mathgrkcrosswalk_11_2013	30
Attachment 1I	hsmathchanges2010__11_2013	30
Attachment 1J	t1.9-text-complexity	30
Attachment 1K	Intro to Mathematics Shifts Agenda	31
Attachment 1L	Sample ELA PD Flyer Fall 2014)	31
Attachment 1M	Disciplinary Literacy Facilitation Guide	31
Attachment 1Ma	Spring 2015 Flyer Math	31
Attachment N	Agenda Statistics 1/7/2015	31
Attachment 1O	common-core-timeline-for-ade-11-28-2	32, 40
Attachment 1P	RIST Agenda 7-24-14	37
Attachment 1Q	RIST Virtual Meeting 7-24-14	37
Attachment 1R	ela_phases123pdchecklist-table_10102013	38
Attachment 1S	math_phases123pdchecklist-table_10102013	38
Attachment 1T	2015 Teachers Institute webpage	39
Attachment 1U	ELL and Math 2014 Conference Descriptions	39
Attachment 1V	Agenda - EQuIP TUSD 1-6-15	39
Attachment 1W	July 18 Initial AZCCRP Meeting Agenda	<del>39</del> 40

Attachment 1X	CCRP Transition Course Project Meeting Agenda 2-27-15	<u>39,40</u>
Attachment 1Y	Heritage WestEd Invite Formative Assessment Practices	<u>40</u>
Attachment 1Z	Leadership Institute Agenda 2-9-15	<u>41</u>
Attachment 2A	Measures of Academic Progress	<u>57,58</u>
Attachment 2B	Accountability In The Digital Age	<u>58,59</u>
Attachment 2C	Aportela and Laczko-Kerr 2013	<u>69,78,84</u> <u>71,81,87</u>
Attachment 2D	Robb 2014	<u>74,73</u>
Attachment 2E	State Board Minutes December 2014.	<u>74,73</u>
Attachment 2F	Accountability Determination Appeal Documents	<u>94,97</u>
Attachment 2G	Alt School Guidance	<u>100,103</u>
<u>Attachment 2H</u>	<u>Crosswalk of the Turnaround Principles with iNACOL and AdvancEd Standards</u>	<u>157</u>
<u>Attachment 2I</u>	<u>AOI Model – State Board Approved</u>	<u>61</u>
<u>Attachment 2J</u>	<u>AZ Accountability Updated</u>	<u>75</u>
Attachment 3-10	ArizonaFrameworkforMeasuringEducatorEffectiveness	<u>213,</u> <u>214,220,</u> <u>224,229,</u> <u>232</u> <u>223, 230,</u> <u>231, 234,</u> <u>239, 242</u>
Attachment 3-11	SBE minutes of framework adoption 04-25-11	<u>213, 214</u> <u>222, 223</u>
Attachment 3A.1	2.0 Plan of Action for Development of Statewide Teacher and Principal Evaluation Model	<u>218,237,</u> <u>238,239</u> <u>227, 246,</u> <u>248, 249</u>
Attachment 3B.1	Sample Fast Fact	<u>232, 242</u>
Table 2	Priority and Focus (to be updated)	
Table 2	Reward (to be updated)	

**COVER SHEET FOR ESEA FLEXIBILITY REQUEST**

Legal Name of Requester: Arizona Department of Education	Requester's Mailing Address: 1535 West Jefferson Street Phoenix AZ 85007
State Contact for the ESEA Flexibility Request	
Name: Jennifer Liewer	
Position and Office: Special Assistant to Deputy Superintendent for Policy and Programs	
Contact's Mailing Address: 1535 West Jefferson Street Phoenix AZ 85007	
Telephone: 602-542-1755	
Fax: 602-542-5440	
Email address: <u>Jennifer.Liewer@azed.gov</u>	
Chief State School Officer (Printed Name): John Huppenthal	Telephone: 602-364-1952
Signature of the Chief State School Officer:  X 	Date:  July 13, 2012
The State, through its authorized representative, agrees to meet all principles of the ESEA Flexibility.	

### WAIVERS

By submitting this flexibility request, the SEA requests flexibility through waivers of the ten ESEA requirements listed below and their associated regulatory, administrative, and reporting requirements by checking each of the boxes below. The provisions below represent the general areas of flexibility requested; a chart appended to the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Frequently Asked Questions* enumerates each specific provision of which the SEA requests a waiver, which the SEA incorporates into its request by reference.

- ☒ 1. The requirements in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(E)-(H) that prescribe how an SEA must establish annual measurable objectives (AMOs) for determining adequate yearly progress (AYP) to ensure that all students meet or exceed the State's proficient level of academic achievement on the State's assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics no later than the end of the 2013–2014 school year. The SEA requests this waiver to develop new ambitious but achievable AMOs in reading/language arts and mathematics in order to provide meaningful goals that are used to guide support and improvement efforts for the State, LEAs, schools, and student subgroups.
- ☒ 2. The requirements in ESEA section 1116(b) for an LEA to identify for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, as appropriate, a Title I school that fails, for two consecutive years or more, to make AYP, and for a school so identified and its LEA to take certain improvement actions. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA and its Title I schools need not comply with these requirements.
- ☒ 3. The requirements in ESEA section 1116(c) for an SEA to identify for improvement or corrective action, as appropriate, an LEA that, for two consecutive years or more, fails to make AYP, and for an LEA so identified and its SEA to take certain improvement actions. The SEA requests this waiver so that it need not comply with these requirements with respect to its LEAs.
- ☒ 4. The requirements in ESEA sections 6213(b) and 6224(c) that limit participation in, and use of funds under the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) and Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) programs based on whether an LEA has made AYP and is complying with the requirements in ESEA section 1116. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA that receives SRSA or RLIS funds may use those funds for any authorized purpose regardless of whether the LEA makes AYP.
- ☒ 5. The requirement in ESEA section 1114(a)(1) that a school have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more in order to operate a schoolwide program. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA may implement interventions consistent with the turnaround principles or interventions that are based on the needs of the students in the school and designed to enhance the entire educational program in a school in any of its priority and focus schools that meet the definitions of “priority schools” and “focus schools,” respectively, set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*, as appropriate, even if those schools do not have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more.

- ☒ 6. The requirement in ESEA section 1003(a) for an SEA to distribute funds reserved under that section only to LEAs with schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may allocate section 1003(a) funds to its LEAs in order to serve any of the State's priority and focus schools that meet the definitions of "priority schools" and "focus schools," respectively, set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*.
- ☒ 7. The provision in ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A) that authorizes an SEA to reserve Title I, Part A funds to reward a Title I school that (1) significantly closed the achievement gap between subgroups in the school; or (2) has exceeded AYP for two or more consecutive years. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may use funds reserved under ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A) for any of the State's reward schools that meet the definition of "reward schools" set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*.
- ☒ 8. The requirements in ESEA section 2141(a), (b), and (c) for an LEA and SEA to comply with certain requirements for improvement plans regarding highly qualified teachers. The SEA requests this waiver to allow the SEA and its LEAs to focus on developing and implementing more meaningful evaluation and support systems.
- ☒ 9. The limitations in ESEA section 6123 that limit the amount of funds an SEA or LEA may transfer from certain ESEA programs to other ESEA programs. The SEA requests this waiver so that it and its LEAs may transfer up to 100 percent of the funds it receives under the authorized programs among those programs and into Title I, Part A.
- ☒ 10. The requirements in ESEA section 1003(g)(4) and the definition of a Tier I school in Section I.A.3 of the School Improvement Grants (SIG) final requirements. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may award SIG funds to an LEA to implement one of the four SIG models in any of the State's priority schools that meet the definition of "priority schools" set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*.

Optional Flexibilities:

If an SEA chooses to request waivers of any of the following requirements, it should check the corresponding box(es) below:

- ☐ 11. The requirements in ESEA sections 4201(b)(1)(A) and 4204(b)(2)(A) that restrict the activities provided by a community learning center under the Twenty-First Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program to activities provided only during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session (i.e., before and after school or during summer recess). The SEA requests this waiver so that 21st CCLC funds may be used to support expanded learning time during the school day in addition to activities during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session.
- ☒ 12. The requirements in ESEA sections 1116(a)(1)(A)-(B) and 1116(c)(1)(A) that require LEAs and SEAs to make determinations of adequate yearly progress (AYP) for schools and LEAs, respectively. The SEA requests this waiver because continuing to determine whether an LEA and its schools make AYP is inconsistent with the SEA's State-developed differentiated

~~recognition, accountability, and support system included in its ESEA flexibility request. The SEA and its LEAs must report on their report cards performance against the AMOs for all subgroups identified in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v), and use performance against the AMOs to support continuous improvement in Title I schools that are not reward schools, priority schools, or focus schools.~~

- ☒ ~~13. The requirements in ESEA section 1113(a)(3)-(4) and (c)(1) that require an LEA to serve eligible schools under Title I in rank order of poverty and to allocate Title I, Part A funds based on that rank ordering. The SEA requests this waiver in order to permit its LEAs to serve a Title I-eligible high school with a graduation rate below 60 percent that the SEA has identified as a priority school even if that school does not rank sufficiently high to be served.~~



**ASSURANCES**

By submitting this application, the SEA assures that:

- ☒ 1. It requests waivers of the above referenced requirements based on its agreement to meet Principles 1 through 4 of the flexibility, as described throughout the remainder of this request.
- ☒ 2. It will adopt English language proficiency (ELP) standards that correspond to the State's college and career ready standards, consistent with the requirement in ESEA section 3113(b)(2), and that reflect the academic language skills necessary to access and meet the new college and career ready standards, no later than the 2013–2014 school year. (Principle 1)
- ☒ 3. It will develop and administer no later than the 2014–2015 school year alternate assessments based on grade level academic achievement standards or alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities that are consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(a)(2) and are aligned with the State's college and career ready standards. (Principle 1)
- ☒ 4. It will develop and administer ELP assessments aligned with the State's ELP standards, consistent with the requirements in ESEA sections 1111(b)(7), 3113(b)(2), and 3122(a)(3)(A)(ii). (Principle 1)
- ☒ 5. It will report annually to the public on college going and college credit accumulation rates for all students and subgroups of students in each LEA and each public high school in the State. (Principle 1)
- ☐ 6. If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and uses achievement on those assessments to identify priority and focus schools, it has technical documentation, which can be made available to the Department upon request, demonstrating that the assessments are administered statewide; include all students, including by providing appropriate accommodations for English Learners and students with disabilities, as well as alternate assessments based on grade level academic achievement standards or alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(a)(2); and are valid and reliable for use in the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system. (Principle 2)
- ☒ 7. It will report to the public its lists of reward schools, priority schools, and focus schools at the time the SEA is approved to implement the flexibility, and annually thereafter, it will publicly recognize its reward schools as well as make public its lists of priority and focus schools if it chooses to update those lists. (Principle 2)
- ☒ 8. Prior to submitting this request, it provided student growth data on their current students and the students they taught in the previous year to, at a minimum, all teachers of reading/language arts and mathematics in grades in which the State administers assessments in those subjects in a manner that is timely and informs instructional programs, or it will do so no later than the deadline required under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund. (Principle 3)

- ☒ ~~9. It will evaluate and, based on that evaluation, revise its own administrative requirements to reduce duplication and unnecessary burden on LEAs and schools. (Principle 4)~~
- ☒ ~~10. It has consulted with its Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in its request.~~
- ☒ ~~11. Prior to submitting this request, it provided all LEAs with notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment on the request and has attached a copy of that notice (Attachment 1) as well as copies of any comments it received from LEAs. (Attachment 2)~~
- ☒ ~~12. Prior to submitting this request, it provided notice and information regarding the request to the public in the manner in which the State customarily provides such notice and information to the public (e.g., by publishing a notice in the newspaper; by posting information on its website) and has attached a copy of, or link to, that notice. (Attachment 3)~~
- ☒ ~~13. It will provide to the Department, in a timely manner, all required reports, data, and evidence regarding its progress in implementing the plans contained throughout this request.~~
- ☒ ~~14. It will report annually on its State report card, and will ensure that its LEAs annually report on their local report cards, for the “all students” group and for each subgroup described in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(H): information on student achievement at each proficiency level; data comparing actual achievement levels to the State’s annual measurable objectives; the percentage of students not tested; performance on the other academic indicator for elementary and middle schools; and graduation rates for high schools. It will also annually report, and will ensure that its LEAs annually report, all other information and data required by ESEA section 1111(h)(1)(C) and 1111(h)(2)(B), respectively.~~

**~~If the SEA selects Option A in section 3.A of its request, indicating that it has not yet developed and adopted all the guidelines for teacher and principal evaluation and support systems, it must also assure that:~~**

- ☐ ~~15. It will submit to the Department for peer review and approval a copy of the guidelines that it will adopt by the end of the 2011–2012 school year. (Principle 3)~~

## CONSULTATION

An SEA must meaningfully engage and solicit input from diverse stakeholders and communities in the development of its request. To demonstrate that an SEA has done so, the SEA must provide an assurance that it has consulted with the State’s Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in the request and provide the following:

1. A description of how the SEA meaningfully engaged and solicited input on its request from teachers and their representatives.
2. A description of how the SEA meaningfully engaged and solicited input on its request from other diverse communities, such as students, parents, community-based organizations, civil rights organizations, organizations representing students with disabilities and English Learners, business organizations, and Indian tribes.

### **Background**

Since 2009 state leaders and educators in Arizona have actively engaged diverse stakeholders, solicited their input, and incorporated their feedback into collaboratively developed reform plans. State leaders decided to apply for Race to the Top with the clear intention that the process be used to create a meaningful, comprehensive and broadly supported reform plan for the state. Each application phase involved extensive community outreach to raise awareness, build support and assist in refining key ideas and implementation strategies.

Following announcement of the Race to the Top, Phase 2 winners, ~~the~~ **former** Governor requested the P-20 Council (a Council formed via Executive Order to advise the Governor on key education issues) to critically review Arizona’s proposal, prioritize activities and draft a feasible implementation plan. The result of their work is known as *Arizona Ready, Arizona’s Education Reform Plan* ([www.arizonaready.com](http://www.arizonaready.com)).

Simultaneously, the **former** Governor asked Science Foundation Arizona (SFAz) to create the *Arizona STEM Business Plan and Network* to unify and align resources around STEM education and to more rapidly prepare students to meet the 21<sup>st</sup> century demands of college- and career-readiness. The STEM agenda is linked directly to the newly adopted Arizona 2010 Arizona Academic Standards (~~Common Core~~) and aligned assessments.

In April and May 2011, SFAz and other state leaders began a 15-county statewide tour to convene key local education, community and business stakeholders to identify their local needs and top priorities. An estimated 800 participants attended these first rounds of meetings. SFAz coordinated with the Arizona Science Teachers Association to ensure substantial teacher participation at the events. The three identified priorities were the following:

- 1) Teacher Quality, Training, and Professional Development;
- 2) Regional Efforts in Partnership with Local School Districts; and
- 3) Engaging Business and Employers in Education

Stakeholder engagement also revealed implementation concerns and challenges. Arizona is unique given the number and characteristics of its LEAs. Arizona has 586 LEAs with over 350 of them being charter schools. Arizona has 2,247 schools; however, over 700 of them have less than 200

students, and 46% of Arizona’s schools are outside of Maricopa County. These characteristics bring both strengths and challenges. As a result of the feedback obtained throughout the past three years, it was determined that significant implementation issues could be addressed by establishing Regional Education Centers. The Centers, directed by locally elected county school superintendents, would provide resources, support, and professional development while assisting LEAs to collaborate and align resources.

In September 2011, staff representing the Governor’s Office, Department of Education, State Board of Education and SFAz embarked upon a second statewide tour with the goal of developing local County Education Reform Plans. These symposiums were hosted by the Regional Education Centers. Feedback gathered at these meetings played an important part in the selection of priorities for Arizona’s Phase Three Race to the Top application. *Arizona Ready*, the SFAz Arizona *STEM Business Plan and Network*, and Regional Education Center concepts were presented and discussed. Total participation for both the spring and fall statewide tours was approximately 1,500.

**Table C.1: Regional Education Symposia**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Region</b>
9/27/2011	La Paz County
9/30/2011	Maricopa County #1
10/3/2011	Maricopa County #2
10/7/2011	Maricopa County #3
10/14/2011	Navajo County
10/17/2011	Yavapai County
10/19/2011	Gila County
10/20/2011	Pima County
10/20/2011	Graham/Greenlee County
10/21/2011	Pinal County
10/24/2011	Cochise County
10/25/2011	Gila County
10/27/2011	Santa Cruz County
10/28/2011	Pinal County
11/1/2011	Coconino County
11/2/2011	Apache County

Throughout this process, Arizona’s education priorities have remained steadfast. In fact, as the level of stakeholder awareness increased the priorities became clearer, stronger and more compelling. Supporting a smooth transition to college- and career-ready standards and assessments; completing the statewide longitudinal data system; and facilitating LEA adoption of new evaluation systems continue to be critical objectives.

### **Current Efforts**

~~Stakeholder and constituent outreach and engagement have been priorities for Superintendent Huppenthal throughout his public career.~~ Engaging stakeholder feedback on Arizona’s ESEA Flexibility Request was, and is still, being meaningfully sought. Knowing the process for application deliberation and approval may be ongoing for some time, stakeholders have been encouraged to continue to comment well beyond the ~~February 28~~ application due date. ADE staff is also

continuing to seek out opportunities to brief stakeholders.

One of the first steps ADE took was to launch an ESEA Flexibility Request website [www.azed.gov/eseawaiver](http://www.azed.gov/eseawaiver). The site has ~~a copy of the official notice to LEAs, a PowerPoint overview of Arizona's application~~ copies of all of Arizona's approved Requests, some supporting summary documents, and a link to the U.S. Department of Education ESEA Flexibility website. ~~Later, copies of the application were made available at this website for public review.~~ There is also an email address for comments: [eseawaiver@azed.gov](mailto:eseawaiver@azed.gov). All comments are being reviewed by the necessary members of the ADE team and, if questions are posed, responses are sent. Comments are being continuously solicited and will continue to affect any possible revisions to this application, to include its implementation.

Below is a ~~historical~~ list of the formal briefings conducted by ADE. A significant effort ~~continues to be has been~~ made to reach out to and seek input from a diverse body of stakeholders including students, parents, teachers, administrators, policymakers, business and industry, community-based organizations, civil rights groups, special education, English learners, and Indian tribes, ~~(See attachment 3B3 for sample agendas.)~~ in order to develop sound policies with buy-in from the education community. Below is an updated Table C.2, listing the various forums in which all aspects of the latest Renewal Request were discussed.

**Table C.2: Arizona ESEA Flexibility Outreach Sessions**

**2012 – ~~2013~~ 2014 2015**

- February 2 – African-American Hoop Group
- February 2 – Legislative Affairs Hoop Group
- February 3 – Greater Phoenix Education Management Council
- February 6 – Native American Hoop Group
- February 7 – Practitioners of English Language Learners meeting
- February 8 – ESEA Flexibility Town Hall – Yuma
- February 9 – ESEA Flexibility Town Hall – Tucson
- February 10 – Greater Phoenix Education Management Council Curriculum Council
- February 10 – Title I Committee of Practitioners webinar
- February 10 – Special Education Advocates briefing
- February 10 – Research and Evaluation - Technical Advisory Council
- February 13 – State Board for Charter Schools
- February 13 – Special Education Regional Directors
- February 14 – Education Committee Chair – House of Representatives
- February 14 – Governor's Office
- February 14 – ESEA Flexibility Town Hall –Flagstaff
- February 15 – Arizona Association of School Business Officials (AASBO) Arizona School Administrators (ASA), Arizona School Boards Association (ASBA) webinar
- February 15 – Teacher webinar
- February 23 – County School Superintendents
- February 23 – Title I Committee of Practitioners Update
- February 24 – Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
- February 27 – State Board of Education
- February 27 – Stand for Children
- February 27 – Teacher Hoop Group

February 28 – Parent Advocacy groups webinar  
March 2 – Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE)  
March 7 – Alternative Education Consortium  
March 8 – Title I Committee of Practitioners Update  
March 16 – Special Education Advisory Group  
March 26 – Legislative Update – District 11 coffee  
April 9 – State Board for Charter Schools  
April 18 – Pima County Superintendents Collaborative  
April 20 – Greater Phoenix Education Management Council Curriculum Council  
April 23 – District Superintendent Advisory Council  
April 26 – ESEA Advisory Council  
May 4 – Arizona Business and Education Coalition  
May 21 – State Board of Education  
May 21 – Advisory Council on Native American Affairs  
May 30 – Charter School Advisory Council  
June 27 – ADE State Leading Change Conference  
July 17 – ESEA Advisory Council  
July 24 – Special Education Advisory Council  
July 31 – Arizona Association of School Business Officials (AASBO) Arizona School Administrators  
          (ASA), Arizona School Boards Association (ASBA) webinar  
August 28 – Arizona Education Association leadership briefing  
August 29 – District Superintendent Advisory Group  
September 14 - Arizona Alternative Education Consortium  
September 20 – Pinal County LEA Leadership  
September 21 – Title I Committee of Practitioners Update  
September 25 – Arizona County School Superintendents Association  
September 25 – Principal Advisory Group  
October 8 – Maricopa County Education Service Agency  
October 17 – Southern Arizona Superintendent’s Collaborative Meeting  
October 25 – La Paz County LEA Leadership  
October 30 – Teacher Advisory Group  
November 15 – Title I MEGA Conference  
November 16 – Greater Phoenix Education Management Council  
November 19 – Yuma County LEA Leadership  
November 20 - Maricopa County Education Service Agency  
November 20 – Accountability Work Group  
November 26 – Graham and Greenlee County LEA Leadership  
December 7 – Quarterly Tribal Education Directors Meeting  
January 3 – Accountability Advisory Group  
January 11 – Title I Committee of Practitioners Update  
January 16 – Cochise County LEA Leadership  
January 24 – Charter School Advisory Group  
January 28 – State Board of Education  
January 29 – Native American Advisory Group  
January 30 – Yavapai County LEA Leadership  
February 6 – Charter School Association webinar

February 8 – Greater Phoenix Education Management Council  
February 12 – Accountability Forum  
February 12 – Mohave County LEA Leadership  
February 15 – Greater Phoenix Education Management Council Curriculum Council  
February 21 – Gila County LEA Leadership  
February 25 – State Board of Education  
February 28 – Title I Committee of Practitioners Update  
March 6 – Coconino County LEA Leadership  
March 14 – AZ LEARNS Subcommittee Meeting  
March 19 – Accountability Advisory Group  
April 8 – AZ LEARNS Subcommittee Meeting  
April 12 – Greater Phoenix Education Management Council Curriculum Council  
April 12 – Arizona Alternative Education Consortium  
April 18 – Navajo and Apache County LEA Leadership  
April 23 – Native American Advisory Group  
April 26 – District Superintendent Advisory Group  
May 6 – Hispanic Advisory Group  
May 7 – Charter School Advisory Group  
May 7 – Quarterly Tribal Education Directors Meeting  
May 9 – Principal Advisory Group  
May 10 – Title I Committee of Practitioners Update  
September 3, 2013 – District Superintendents Advisory Group  
September 13, 2013 – Accountability Advisory Group  
September 20, 2013 - Greater Phoenix Education Management Council Curriculum Council  
September 23, 2013 – Charter Schools Advisory Group  
October 3, 2013 – Western Regional Council  
October 4, 2013 – Arizona Alternative Education Consortium  
October 4, 2013 – Principal Advisory Group  
October 23, 2013 – Arizona Mayor’s Education Roundtable  
November 14, 2013 – AZ Tribal Education Leaders  
November 18, 2013 – African American Advisory Group  
November 20, 2013 – Charter Schools Advisory Group  
November 22, 2013 – GPEMC Curriculum Council  
December 3, 2013 – District Superintendents Advisory Group  
December 16, 2013 – Hispanic Advisory Group  
January 7, 2014 – Teacher Advisory Group  
January 13, 2014 – Accountability Advisory Group  
January 23, 2014 – Accountability Forum  
January 29, 2014 – Charter Schools Advisory Group  
February 11, 2014 - Accountability Forum  
March 7, 2014 – Title I Committee of Practitioners  
March 12, 2014 - Accountability Forum  
March 13, 2014 – AZLEARNs Subcommittee  
March 24, 2014 – State Board of Education  
March 26, 2014 – District Superintendent’s Advisory Group  
March 28, 2014 - Greater Phoenix Education Management Council Curriculum Council  
April 11, 2014 – AZLEARNs Subcommittee



April 11, 2014 – GPEMC Curriculum Council

April 29, 2014 – Hispanic Advisory Group

11/07/14	ELL Advisory Group Meeting
11/14/14	Meet with AOI Providers
11/19/14	Special Education Advisory Group Meeting (SEAP)
02/02/15	ASU Partnership for State Accountability
06/17/14	Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP)
08/21/14	Cochise County Special Ed. Director Meeting
08/22/14	Pima County Special Ed. Director Meeting
09/11/14	Tucson Regional Community Focus Group
09/19/14	Special Education Advisory Group Meeting (SEAP)
09/19/14	Phoenix Regional Community Focus Group
10/21/14	Santa Cruz County Special Ed. Director Meeting
10/23/14	Pinal County Special Ed. Director Meeting
10/24/14	Tucson Regional Community Focus Group
11/03/14	Flagstaff Regional Community Focus Group
11/06/14	Tucson Regional Community Focus Group
11/07/14	ELL Advisory Group Meeting
11/14/14	AOI Accountability Workgroup Meeting
11/18/14	Special Education Advisory Group Meeting (SEAP)
11/21/14	Phoenix Regional Community Focus Group
12/02/14	CCRI Subcommittee
12/15/14	Charter Schools Association
12/22/14	Accountability Advisory Group (AAG) Meeting
01/20/15	Special Education Advisory Group Meeting (SEAP)
02/05/15	Center for the Future of Arizona
02/06/15	GPMEC
02/06/15	Discuss Accountability Proposal (conference call)
02/11/15	Meeting with NACEP and Rio Salado College
02/17/15	Accountability Advisory Group (AAG) Meeting
02/27/15	Accountability Advisory Group (AAG) Meeting
03/03/15	Special Education Advisory Group Meeting (SEAP)
03/05/15	High Flyers (webinar)
03/05/15 – 03/06/15	COP Meeting/Title I Spring Coordinator's Meeting
03/11/15	Press release to statewide media contacts <a href="http://www.azed.gov/public-relations/files/2015/03/031115escawaiverrequestpublicinput.pdf">http://www.azed.gov/public-relations/files/2015/03/031115escawaiverrequestpublicinput.pdf</a>
03/11/15	Email invitation to 3/17 webinar to over 40,000 educators and education stakeholders
03/16/15	Accountability Advisory Group (AAG) Meeting
03/17/15	Webinar -152 live attendees from 12 of Arizona's 15 counties; <b>ESEA Flexibility Renewal PowerPoint</b> posted to <a href="http://www.azed.gov/escawaiver/">http://www.azed.gov/escawaiver/</a> on March 17, 2015 (updated on March



	19, 2015)
03/18-19/15	<u><b>ESEA Flexibility Renewal Webinar Recording and ESEA Flexibility Renewal Webinar Questions and Answers</b></u> posted to ESEA Waiver web page
03/27/15	Pima County Special Ed. Director Meeting
04/01/15	Graham/Greenlee County Special Ed. Director Meeting
04/23/15	Pinal County Special Ed. Director Meeting

### Extending Previous Outreach

Examples of the extensive outreach and details of concerns gathered from those contacts are contained in this section. ADE continues to consider these issues and new ones raised by our stakeholders, as the implementation of the Principles in the Request proceeds.

Participation and the level of engagement have varied by stakeholder group. ~~The One~~ webinar held for teachers had 69 participants, while the AASBO, ASA, ASBA webinar welcomed 72. ~~Thus far the A~~ most commonly asked question was with regard to the requirement of LEAs to use Title I funds to provide Supplemental Education Services (SES) to students in schools in improvement status.

Additionally, the comments and questions received that made the biggest impact on the application had to do with timing. One superintendent reminded us that his district is **already** planning for next year now, and that a majority of his staff would be leaving for the year by May. Arizona also has a large number of year-round schools and LEAs that use alternative calendars. Indeed, many Arizona schools begin their school years in July-August. Stakeholders cautioned ADE to be cognizant of these issues when planning for the implementation of any new reforms, particularly in light of the fact that Arizona's ~~new~~ A-F Letter Grade System had just ~~went gone~~ into effect ~~this the~~ past school year (2011-2012).

Many stakeholders have been asked to ~~participate on an ESEA Advisory Group to~~ help inform ADE's decisions throughout the application process and its implementation. ~~Members This~~ includes representatives from the Governor's Office, State Board of Education, State Board for Charter Schools, Arizona School Boards Association, Arizona Education Association, Arizona School Administrators Association, Stand for Children, Teach for America, Greater Phoenix Education Management Council, Arizona Charter Schools Association, and representatives from LEAs. ~~Members will be added Outreach has been extended~~ to ensure representation of Native American communities, ~~Four of the members are also members of the~~ Title I Committee of Practitioners, and ~~two are members of the Research and Evaluation's~~ Accountability Advisory Group. ~~To date, the new ESEA Advisory Group has met twice on April 3 and April 26.~~

Meaningful stakeholder engagement is a priority for ADE, and is a critical element of all ADE initiatives. The Department offers numerous and ongoing opportunities for the public to provide input on plans and strategies for realizing the vision articulated in *Arizona Ready*. These efforts, which are now regular operating procedures, ensure transparency, raise awareness and maintain effective working relationships with key stakeholder groups as Arizona continues on its path of education reform.

Since the ~~conditional~~ **November 2014** approval of our Flexibility Request, ADE has continued consultation and outreach efforts. Briefings have included summaries of the final Request along

with the two required conditions for extended approval. ~~There were also two handouts provided at each presentation where~~ Participants ~~were continue to be~~ strongly encouraged to send any comments, questions or concerns ~~either to Karla Phillips, the ADE ESEA Flexibility lead or~~ to the designated email address [eseawaiver@azed.gov](mailto:eseawaiver@azed.gov).

One of the most frequent concerns noted was the change from the five-year cohort rate to the four-year rate in the state accountability system. Arizona had been using the four year adjusted cohort rate for federal accountability but was using a five year adjusted cohort rate for state purposes. For LEAs, this was perceived as a significant policy shift. In addition to the four- and five-year graduation rate, based on ADE's conversations with stakeholders the six- and seven-year rates were added as 2 or 1 additional points (respectively) in an effort to incentivize support of Arizona students with special needs, as well as English language learners and Native American students from rural areas of the state.

Concerns were also expressed over the identification of alternative and online schools as Priority and Focus Schools, especially with a potential increase to the weight of the graduation rate.

With regard to the implementation of educator evaluation systems and proposed changes to the definition of “academic progress”, the primary concern was the lack of available data for non-ESEA tested teachers.

Stakeholders also had ample opportunity to provide comments to the full State Board and an advisory committee of the Board where both proposals to meet the required conditions were publicly posted and discussed at 2-3 different meetings. The details of ADE's recommendations are discussed in Principles 2 and 3.

The CCRI, graduation rate weighting and metrics were also discussed and crafted, with opportunity for public comment, at two SBE subcommittee meetings, two Accountability Advisory Group meetings, and an Accountability Forum hosted by ~~former~~ Superintendent Huppenthal. Many constituents from rural areas in Northern Arizona attended the forum and voiced concerns directly to the Superintendent.

The proposed and final amendments to the educator evaluation framework were actually generated during meetings that included stakeholders such as the Arizona School Boards Association, the Arizona School Administrators Association, Stand for Children, the Arizona Education Association, the Arizona Charter School Association as well as four LEA Human Resources representatives. Their concerns ~~are~~ ~~were~~ reflected in the final proposal.

It is also important to highlight ~~the continual~~ specific and frequent outreach to the Title I Committee of Practitioners. In particular, this group asked ADE important and insightful questions regarding the proposed amendment for alternative schools that ultimately shaped our final proposals.

ADE will continue to build on the concerns and comments of its stakeholders as its next generation student accountability system is being designed and its educator evaluation framework is being reviewed, as described below.

Arizona's ~~amended~~ application, as well as PowerPoint presentations, and handouts ~~were made~~ **continue to be made** available at [www.azed.gov/eseawaiver](http://www.azed.gov/eseawaiver) for public review. There is also an email address for comments: [eseawaiver@azed.gov](mailto:eseawaiver@azed.gov).

## EVALUATION

The Department encourages an SEA that receives approval to implement the flexibility to collaborate with the Department to evaluate at least one program, practice, or strategy the SEA or its LEAs implement under principle 1, 2, or 3. Upon receipt of approval of the flexibility, an interested SEA will need to nominate for evaluation a program, practice, or strategy the SEA or its LEAs will implement under principles 1, 2, or 3. The Department will work with the SEA to determine the feasibility and design of the evaluation and, if it is determined to be feasible and appropriate, will fund and conduct the evaluation in partnership with the SEA, ensuring that the implementation of the chosen program, practice, or strategy is consistent with the evaluation design.

☒ Check here if you are interested in collaborating with the Department in this evaluation, if your request for the flexibility is approved.

## OVERVIEW OF SEA’S REQUEST FOR THE ESEA FLEXIBILITY

Provide an overview (about 500 words) of the SEA’s request for the flexibility that:

1. explains the SEA’s comprehensive approach to implement the waivers and principles and describes the SEA’s strategy to ensure this approach is coherent within and across the principles; and
2. describes how the implementation of the waivers and principles will enhance the SEA’s and its LEAs’ ability to increase the quality of instruction for students and improve student achievement.

Arizona has always been an independent state, imbued by a frontier spirit that embraces individual freedom while welcoming necessary reform and innovation. With 22 distinctly different Native American nations and communities, the many social and economic challenges associated with a border state and a vast geographic territory encompassing a myriad of income, ethnic and education-level demographic strata, Arizona has strived to find the balance between aggressive reforms coupled with local flexibility.

Arizona’s request for flexibility under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is a defining step toward substantially increasing the state’s quality of instruction; improving student achievement; and ensuring all high school graduates are college- and career-ready.

The ESEA flexibility sought benefits Arizona’s public education system in three key ways:

- 1) Moves Arizona toward *one* school accountability system rather than two, thereby communicating a clear, consistent message to parents, teachers, administrators and other important stakeholders on Arizona’s schools academic performance.
- 2) Provides Arizona’s schools and local education agencies (LEAs) with the flexibility they need to allocate limited resources to best meet the unique needs of their diverse student populations.
- 3) Helps facilitate the reform of the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) from a compliance bureaucracy into an education support center that streamlines duplicative processes, increases transparency and provides world-class service to all of its education stakeholders.

As we submit our request to continue the work started under Arizona’s initial Flexibility Request, the landscape has shifted. Although we are heading in the same direction, we are currently navigating through a sea of change. As our schools begin to experience the first administration of the new statewide assessment aligned to Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards, we realize this is a huge opportunity for the Department and education leaders across the state to improve our A-F Letter Grade Accountability System. During this transitional period, the methodology proposed in this request will serve as the foundation for a stronger, more robust and valid system to provide accountability for Arizona’s schools, students, parents and stakeholders. Principal 2, in particular, contains an extensive description of our overall plan; we are confident our proposal will continue our partnership under this Flexibility Request Renewal.

~~Arizona additionally benefits from the fact that most of the education reforms required in order to qualify for ESEA flexibility are already being met or aggressively pursued.~~

The year 2010 was a monumental year for establishing much-needed, transformative education reforms in Arizona. Then Senate Education Chairman John Huppenthal – and current state Superintendent of Public Instruction – championed two critical pieces of legislation: Senate Bill 1040 (teacher and principal evaluations) and Senate Bill 1286 (schools; achievement profiles; letter grades). SB-1040 directed the State Board of Education to adopt a model framework for teacher and principal evaluation and SB-1286 created Arizona’s new A-F Letter Grading System. In the summer of 2010, the State Board of Education also adopted Arizona’s Common Core Standards and the state Superintendent signed a Memorandum of Understanding to become a governing state of the new Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for Career and College consortium (PARCC). In addition, Arizona’s SEA, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE), was in the midst of restructuring its School Improvement division.

Arizona finds it imperative that its many diverse education stakeholders’ needs are considered not only in the development of its ESEA Flexibility Request but also in the resulting implementation. To that end, the ADE has been disseminating information, promoting discussion and gathering meaningful input through multiple forums and communication channels. While the outreach and feedback-gathering initiative is still ongoing, a common theme is already surfacing: timing is critical. Since many major education reforms were only recently established in 2010, implementation of these reforms commenced during the 2011 school year. Schools and LEAs, in the midst of realigning resources and strategies to accommodate recent major changes, are reticent to immediately embrace even more changes. A gradual, phased-in approach is required. Arizona’s transition from using both its new state A-F school Letter Grade System and the federal adequate yearly progress system to one seamless, streamlined system of school accountability requires an aggressive yet realistic implementation timeline that accomplishes the following:

- Develops new annual measurable objectives (AMOs) that are a natural extension of Arizona’s current school accountability system;
- Ensures Arizona’s A-F letter grading system serves as the foundation from which to build a single, unified state and federal school accountability system;
- Provides educators meaningful and useful data for school improvement and educator evaluations; and,
- Gives Arizona’s many, diverse education stakeholders the time necessary to utilize the information obtained from a single school accountability system to improve instructional quality, better prepare students for collegiate studies and professional careers and achieve higher student academic outcomes.

While ever-focused on improving student outcomes and teacher instruction, Arizona stands committed to ensuring its bold and robust education agenda aligns with the important principles and waiver requirements of an ESEA Flexibility Request. Even the reorganization of ADE leadership has coincided with federal priorities. One of the ways ADE has tried to become more effective is to reorganize around functions rather than funding streams. The ADE’s four main program area divisions now closely align with the four organizational pillars outlined in this application: Accountability & Assessments, Highly Effective Schools, Highly Effective Teachers and Leaders, and High Academic Standards.

Encouraging earlier and more supportive intervention in priority and focus schools; ensuring the implementation of rigorous college- and career-ready standards in ALL schools; directing that both student achievement AND growth are measured in ONE valid, rigorous and clear school accountability system; measuring and emphasizing through evaluations the vital link between quality teacher instruction and principal leadership and student achievement; and streamlining unnecessary

~~bureaucratic bloat and policies; are ALL transformative education reforms, which when implemented in concert, ultimately ensure that all of Arizona's students are not only prepared to survive in, but to thrive in, a fast-paced, dynamic global economy where information, adaptability and technological savvy and innovation are the keys to success. While applying for ESEA flexibility requires these important education reforms, Arizona has already begun to implement most of them and will be able to do so with increased agility and speed with the issuance of key ESEA waivers.~~

## PRINCIPLE 1: COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS

### 1.A ADOPT COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide evidence corresponding to the option selected.

<p><b>Option A</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The State has adopted college- and career-ready standards in at least reading/language arts and mathematics that are common to a significant number of States, consistent with part (1) of the definition of college- and career-ready standards.</p> <p>i. Attach evidence that the State has adopted the standards, consistent with the State's standards adoption process. (Attachment 4)</p>	<p><b>Option B</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The State has adopted college- and career-ready standards in at least reading/language arts and mathematics that have been approved and certified by a State network of institutions of higher education (IHEs), consistent with part (2) of the definition of college- and career-ready standards.</p> <p>i. Attach evidence that the State has adopted the standards, consistent with the State's standards adoption process. (Attachment 4)</p> <p>ii. Attach a copy of the memorandum of understanding or letter from a State network of IHEs certifying that students who meet these standards will not need remedial coursework at the postsecondary level. (Attachment 5)</p>
--	---

## 1.B TRANSITION TO COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS

*Provide the SEA’s plan to transition to and implement no later than the 2013-2014 school year college- and career-ready standards statewide in at least reading/language arts and mathematics for all students and schools and include an explanation of how this transition plan is likely to lead to all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, gaining access to and learning content aligned with such standards. The Department encourages an SEA to include in its plan activities related to each of the italicized questions in the corresponding section of the document titled ESEA Flexibility Review Guidance, or to explain why one or more of those activities is not necessary to its plan.*

The workplace is far different today than it was even ten years ago. Unlike past generations, teachers today must prepare students for a world of possibilities that may or may not currently exist. The workforce of tomorrow must be flexible, innovative and be able to draw from a deep and vast skill set. The ability to effectively communicate, collaborate and quickly adapt to challenging situations will be critical. The dramatic changes in the 21<sup>st</sup> century work environment are requiring a significant shift in the design and expectations of the K-12 education system. All students must graduate high school well prepared for postsecondary learning through college and/or career options. Arizona’s ~~Common Core~~ Standards are clear, focused, and coherent; establish consistently high expectations; and are designed to ensure that all students have ready access to rigorous, relevant content that meets postsecondary requirements. By setting high expectations with a commitment to meeting individual student needs, Arizona is positioning our future workforce to be well prepared and successful. Arizona is committed to the full implementation of the college- and career-ready standards by ensuring that both educators and students receive the necessary information and support throughout the transition process.

**Option A:** The Arizona State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics in June 2010 (~~Attachment 4: State Board of Education CCSS Adoption Minutes 6-28-10~~), which were rebranded as the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards (ACCRS) in September 2013

**1.B. Is the SEA’s plan to transition to and implement college- and career-ready standards statewide in at least reading/language arts and mathematics no later than the 2013–2014 school year realistic, of high quality, and likely to lead to all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, gaining access to and learning content aligned with such standards?**

The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) has developed an aggressive, yet realistic plan to transition to and implement ~~Arizona’s Common Core Standards~~ **Arizona College and Career Ready Standards** in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics in all schools by 2013-2014. Additionally, ADE, in conjunction with Arizona’s five Regional Education Centers, has developed a system of support aligned to Arizona’s Race to the Top plan, to assist schools in implementing the new standards with fidelity to ensure **all** students (to include English language learners (ELLs), students with disabilities and low-achieving students) have access to learning content aligned to ~~the~~



~~new standards. Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards in ELA and Mathematics.~~

ADE's transition and implementation plan for the college- and career-ready standards relies on collaboration across various stakeholders. Experts from K-12 Academic Standards and the Offices of English Language Acquisition Services, Title I, Early Childhood, Exceptional Student Services, School Improvement, Highly Effective Teachers and Leaders, Migrant Student Services, and Indian Education have ~~developed~~ ~~delivered~~ an integrated system of support that includes professional development, ongoing technical assistance, guidance documents, and an array of instructional resources. In building strong support for the implementation and transition to the college- and career-ready standards, ADE has engaged institutes of higher education, the Governor's office, County Education Agencies, Local Education Agency (LEA) content experts, educational leaders, family organizations, philanthropic groups, and the business community. In cooperation with these collaborative groups, ADE developed an aggressive grade-specific implementation timeline for the college- and career-ready standards, and a three-phase professional development plan that ~~will be~~ ~~was~~ rolled out by ADE in conjunction with a statewide cadre of standards experts, working closely with Arizona's five Regional Education Centers. ~~The multi-year implementation plan (Attachment 1A AZCCRS-statewide-implementation-plan) was developed and published on the K-12 Academic Standards website. An overview and specific in depth information regarding the plan) is located on the K-12 Academic Standards website as well. (Attachment 1B Professional Development Phases)~~

~~Differentiated professional development, technical assistance, and support will be provided based on the diverse and specific needs of educators and students in local regions and counties. The ADE will work closely with departments and projects that serve LEAs with high populations of Native American students such as School Improvement/SIG and Arizona State University's BEST (Building Educator Support Teams) program.~~

~~In order to maintain open communication systems, gather specific input, and provide important information on a regular basis, members of ADE's College and Career Ready Standards leadership team will meet quarterly with the Education Directors of Tribal Councils from across Arizona. Agendas will focus on discussions and critical action steps that will support the goal of significantly improving student achievement for all Native American students. Specifically, federal and state laws, State Board of Education policies, and ADE guidance will be addressed to ensure an informed and collaborative alliance is generated. At the regional and county level, educational leadership will meet regularly with tribal education directors and district leadership to address local needs and action steps. A tiered system of support will be put into place that will include statewide collaborative teams, regional and/or county teams, and well-informed local leadership with members from LEAs, Tribal Council education offices, County Education offices, and the Arizona Department of Education.~~

~~After adopting Arizona's Common Core Standards in June 2010, the ADE initially developed a broad preliminary plan for implementation of the Common Core. The plan was then updated to provide specific grade level information and more comprehensive timelines. LEAs were provided with six options for implementation across the K-12 spectrum with each option emphasizing specific degrees of implementation across grades for each year of implementation. A specific, more aggressive implementation timeline has since been designed for LEAs based on Arizona's Race to the Top plan – with the goal of having all schools statewide implementing the new standards K-12 by the 2013-2014 schools year. This plan will be supported with assistance from the ADE and~~

~~Arizona's five Regional Education Centers through Race to the Top. ADE has also established a three-phase plan for professional development and technical assistance to support the implementation plan spanning 2010-2015.~~

To support the statewide implementation plan, two additional guiding documents were provided to support LEAs in their systemic planning to move towards full implementation. The Consideration for Implementation Document (Attachment 1C considerations-for-implementation-of-azccrs) provides activities and examples of activities to consider when moving through transitional to full implementation of new standards. Activities included Professional Development for Leadership and Teachers, and collaborative opportunities, including grade level and content team meetings focused on understanding the standards. The Considerations document was designed to assist in systemic planning for implementation and as awareness throughout the transition cycle.

The third support document is the Strategic Implementation Plan (Attachment 1D -detailed-azccrs-str-plan-3-18-14). Revised in March 2014, this plan outlines the strategic areas of focus for implementation as well as the goals, strategies and objectives to meet the end goal of full implementation. Components of the Strategic Implementation Plan include; Communication and Awareness, Resource Development, Professional Development, Evaluation of Success and Analysis of Transition Issues.

These transition documents began the transition process through strategic planning and support and continue to be revised as the state continues to refine standards implementation support while schools and districts continue to learn and provide feedback to us regarding the transition timeline.

To provide evidence and accountability regarding the implementation of the state standards in ELA and mathematics, a Declaration of Curricular and Instructional Alignment (Attachment 1E Declaration of Curricular and Instructional Alignment webpage) must be signed by Principals, Superintendents and individual School Board Presidents. 99% of LEAs completed a “Declaration of Curricular and Instructional Alignment to the Arizona Academic Standards” for the 2013-2014 academic year. These standards include Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards for ELA and Mathematics, as adopted by the State Board of Education in 2010.

Organized and regularly occurring outreach efforts have been conducted by the Special Projects Unit, the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards Leadership Team, and other agency divisions working with the Arizona Hispanic /Latino, Native American, and African American communities to raise student academic outcomes for those student groups demonstrating critical need in statewide assessment data, graduation rates, dropout rates, and post-secondary enrollment and completion rates.

Arizona encompasses the two largest Native American reservations in the country, as well as the greatest number of high density schools in the nation. In order to maintain open communication systems, gather specific input, and provide important information on a regular basis, members of ADE’s College and Career Ready Standards Leadership Team meets quarterly with Education Directors of Tribal Councils, education leaders and educators of Native American students across Arizona. (Attachment 1F College and Career Readiness ASU Focus Group results)

Agendas (Attachment 1G Tribal Leader Mtg. Invite(2)) will focus on discussions and critical action

steps to support the goal of significantly improving student achievement for all Native American students. Specifically, federal and state laws, State Board of Education policies, and ADE guidance will continue to be addressed to ensure an informed and collaborative alliance is generated as part of a statewide Native American Education and Outreach effort. In these coordinated cross collaborative efforts a particular focus will be given to the state’s reservation -based schools and high density Native American schools, where the greatest achievement gaps persist.

A tiered system of support will be put into place that will include statewide collaborative teams with members from LEAs, Tribal Education Departments, and the Arizona Department of Education. Native American Education and Outreach efforts will be coordinated internally with Title I, School Improvement, Standards, Assessment, and Research and Evaluation Units within the department to address the unique educational needs of Native American students at the state level. Native American Education and Outreach will work with other entities to provide -meaningful academic achievement reports, such as statewide Native American academic achievement data, the National Indian Education Study data from Arizona, and other related research publications and professional development to drive improved instructional outcomes and policy supporting Native American college-and career -readiness. ADE will showcase best practices and meaningful research supporting the meeting of unique educational needs of Native American students. Statewide conferences and events with external partners, including Tribal Education Departments, universities and colleges, and the West Comprehensive Center will focus on strengthening culturally appropriate and rigorous instruction throughout the state.

With the full implementation of the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards and the first administration of the aligned assessment occurring this year, there will be opportunity to open a dialogue to both improve the quality of the existing standards and ensure they are valid goals for students as we prepare them for challenges of the next grade level, postsecondary work, and careers. To this end, the State, in conjunction with a variety of stakeholders, will begin a comprehensive standards review process, which will seek to uncover any deficiencies in existing college-and career-ready standards. This will be a multi-stage process. As a first step, the State, through regional meetings and on-line environments, will gather broad input from educators, higher education, business, parents and students. As this information is gathered, the State will develop diverse committees to review public comment, categorize comments, and determine actionable items. Actionable comments will then be used in conjunction with exemplary referent standards to improve existing college-and career-ready standards. Arizona is particularly fortunate to have a strong partnership with the West Comprehensive Center at WestEd, which has agreed to provide assistance to the State with national experts to advise us on our progress. Together, we will determine to what degree Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards in ELA and Mathematics:

- adequately represent the knowledge and skills that all students should know and be able to do at each grade level,
- reflect the appropriate depth and breadth of the content domains,
- contain the clarity and consistency needed to effectively guide instruction and assessment,
- are inclusive of and sensitive to the full range of cultural, language, and geographic diversity in this state, and
- are free of language endorsing or prescribing a particular pedagogy or curriculum,

Ultimately, the revision teams will provide the State with quality standards documents to assist in guiding what students need to know and be able to do by the end of a given school year in academic areas in order to be on track and achieve college-and career-readiness. Upon reflection of the development of previous Arizona academic standards, every time a group of Arizona constituents have written, implemented, assessed and reviewed standards, the final product represents an improvement, which ultimately supports Arizona educators and positively affects student outcomes.

**Table 1.1 Arizona’s Common Core Standards—ELA and Mathematics—Race to the Top Implementation Plans**

In June 2010, Arizona’s State Board of Education adopted the Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics. The following timelines provide minimum implementation parameters:

**English Language Arts**

	2011-2012	2012-2013 Minimal	2012-2013 Optimal	2013-2014	2014-2015
<b>K</b>	Full	Full	Full	Full	Full
<b>1</b>	Transitional	Full	Full	Full	Full
<b>2</b>	Transitional	Full	Full	Full	Full
<b>3</b>	Transitional	Full	Full	Full	Full
<b>4</b>	Transitional	*Targeted	Full	Full	Full
<b>5</b>	Transitional	*Targeted	Full	Full	Full
<b>6</b>	Transitional	*Targeted	Full	Full	Full
<b>7</b>	Transitional	*Targeted	Full	Full	Full
<b>8</b>	Transitional	Full	Full	Full	Full
<b>9</b>	Transitional	Full	Full	Full	Full
<b>10</b>	Transitional	Targeted	Targeted	Full	Full
<b>11</b>	Transitional	Targeted	Targeted	Full	Full
<b>12</b>	Transitional	Targeted	Targeted	Full	Full

- **Transitional** implementation is defined by the Arizona Department of Education as transitioning from awareness to scaffolded implementation of Arizona’s Common Core Standards—ELA.
- **Targeted** implementation is defined by the Arizona Department of Education as the first step toward full implementation. In English language arts, “targeted” refers to instructional shifts; specific content emphasis by strand, and an intentional increase of rigor in the classroom.
- **Full** implementation is defined by the Arizona Department of Education as a complete transition to teaching Arizona’s Common Core Standards—ELA (plus Arizona additions) with fidelity.

**\*Note that in grades 4-7, Targeted implementation will result in only two years of Full implementation in grades 6-9 during the 2014-2015 school year.**

**Mathematics**

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
<b>K</b>	Full	Full	Full	Full
<b>1</b>	Transitional	Full	Full	Full
<b>2</b>	Transitional	Full	Full	Full
<b>3</b>	Transitional	Targeted	Full	Full

4	Transitional	Targeted	Full	Full
5	Transitional	Targeted	Full	Full
6	Transitional	Targeted	Full	Full
7	Transitional	Targeted	Full	Full
8	Transitional	Targeted	Full	Full
9	Transitional	Targeted	Full	Full
10	Transitional	Targeted	Full	Full
11	Transitional	Targeted	Full	Full
12	Transitional	Targeted	Full	Full

- **Transitional** implementation is defined by the Arizona Department of Education as transitioning from awareness to scaffolded implementation of Arizona’s Common Core Standards—Mathematics.
- **Targeted** implementation is defined by the Arizona Department of Education as the first step toward full implementation. In mathematics, “targeted” refers to instructional shifts (Standards for Mathematical Practice), specific content emphasis by domain, and fluency expectations.
- **Full** implementation is defined by the Arizona Department of Education as a complete transition to teaching Arizona’s Common Core Standards—Mathematics (plus Arizona additions) with fidelity.

**Please Note:** Full implementation for ~~2012-2013 and 2013-2014~~ is a complete transition to Arizona’s Common Core Standards—Mathematics (plus Arizona additions) with particular attention given to the 2008 performance objectives assessed by Arizona’s Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS).

*A high-quality plan will likely include activities related to the following questions or an explanation of why one or more of the activities are not included.*

*Does the SEA intend to analyze the extent of alignment between the State’s current content standards and the college- and career-ready standards to determine similarities and differences between those two sets of standards? If so, will the results be used to inform the transition to college- and career-ready standards?*

ADE K-12 Academic Standards facilitated master teacher teams in the analysis of the alignments between Arizona’s previous ELA (2004) and mathematics standards (2008) and the Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards (2010). ~~ADE completed an analysis of the alignments between Arizona’s previous ELA and Mathematics standards and the college- and career-ready standards.~~

The ensuing guidance documents were developed and posted on the Department’s website to establish the similarities and differences between the two sets of standards. Arizona master educators worked in grade span teams, facilitated by ADE content specialists, to conduct the in-depth analysis from the summer of 2010 through the spring of 2011 (*20 sessions, over 38 days from June 7, 2010 – May 31, 2011*). Committee membership consisted of a cross section of Arizona educators representing elementary, middle school, and high school grade spans, plus representation from higher education. For both the ELA and Mathematics standards, ~~cross-walk alignment between the previous Arizona standards and the college- and career-ready standards were completed along with grade-level documents that include explanations and examples and summaries of changes highlighting critical changes at each grade level. The crosswalk, alignment, and summary of changes~~

~~documents have been made available to all LEAs and have also been addressed during rollout trainings of the college- and career-ready standards ([www.azed.gov/standards-practices/common-core-state-standards/#info](http://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/common-core-state-standards/#info)), Cross-Walk/Alignment documents (Attachment 1H mathgrkcrosswalk\_11\_2013) were created and shared through technical assistance, newsletters, professional development, and through communication directly with LEAs and schools. A second mathematics support resource was also created by teacher teams, entitled the Summary of Changes documents (Attachment 1I -hsmathchanges2010\_\_11\_2013). The purpose of the Summary of Change documents was to provide educators with an “at-a-glance” summary of the content shifts from the previous standards to the college- and career-ready standards. The Summary of Changes documents allowed teachers to plan for transitional/full implementation of Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards in Mathematics, while also including specific standards that were being assessed at the state level on the 2008 Mathematics Standards during the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years.~~

While in general there is a high degree of alignment between the previous Arizona ELA standards and the college- and career-ready standards in term of concepts, there are a number of significant shifts in expectations for both teachers and students. ~~. To provide support to districts the Informational Text Complexity Analysis Worksheet for Instruction (Attachment 1J t1.9-text-complexity) is located on the website within the K-12 Academic Standards and Exceptional Students Services (ESS) websites.~~ The new reading standards require an increased focus on text complexity and significant use of informational text. In the writing standards, there is an increased emphasis on argument and informative writing using primary and secondary sources with much less emphasis on personal narrative. Language standards stress the development of academic and domain-specific vocabulary while speaking and listening standards are prominently integrated into the ELA standards. Students K-12 must be immersed in both purposeful informal and formal dialogue including demonstrating capacity to provide a multi-media presentation. ~~Grades 6-12 ELA standards also fully integrate content literacy in social studies, science and technical subjects.~~

Similarly, the degree of alignment between Arizona’s previous mathematics standards and the college- and career-ready standards was high, although there are significant shifts in specific grade level content and ~~expectations an overall increase in the rigor of the standards.~~ In addition to content, eight standards for mathematical practice that emphasize problem-solving, quantitative reasoning and modeling bring a new focus on developing “habits of mind” in students. ~~Analysis of the Mathematics Crosswalk revealed movement of topics across grade levels with an increased cognitive demand required of students. The main intent of this movement was to develop a deeper conceptual understanding of certain topics in certain grade levels. These conceptual shifts ([www.azed.gov/standards-practices/files/2011/10/instructional-shift.pdf](http://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/files/2011/10/instructional-shift.pdf)) include the following.~~ The Mathematical Practices were represented in Strand 5 Concept 2 of the 2008 Arizona Mathematics Standards and emphasized problem solving and minimal mathematical processes. Analysis of the Mathematics Crosswalk revealed movement of topics across grade levels with an increased cognitive demand shown throughout Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards. These conceptual shifts include the following:

- (Grades K-2) numeration and operations are intensified and introduced earlier;
- (Grades 3-5) fractions as numbers are emphasized with the number line used as a tool for thinking;
- (Grades 6-8) ratio and proportion and statistics are addressed at deeper levels of sophistication



- with a more rigorous algebraic understanding in eighth grade; and,
- (High School) all students must master some topics traditionally from Algebra 2 or beyond such as simple periodic functions, polynomials, radicals, and mathematical modeling.

~~These shifts informed the implementation support we provided as we rolled out these more rigorous standards.~~ These content shifts and the broader instructional shifts of focus, coherence and rigor, informed the implementation support ADE and other state providers continue to offer. Included is an agenda from a current Phase 1.5 (in between Phase 1 and Phase 2) course that ADE offers to teachers and administrators to assist in implementation in Mathematics (Attachment 1K - Intro to Mathematics Shifts Agenda).

The information from the ~~standards crosswalks and alignment documents~~ different alignment documents created by ADE have been used to inform the transition to college- and career-ready standards, and assist in targeting key areas of needed professional development. Key content in ELA trainings includes effective strategies for increasing text complexity, using informational text, and integrating academic vocabulary instruction and content literacy blended across multiple areas of study. ~~Face-to-face professional development and webinars provide the professional learning support that has been and is continues to be offered.~~ (Attachment 1L - Sample ELA PD Flyer Fall 2014) Literacy has become an integral part of all content areas in Grades 6-12. Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and technical subjects are an important vehicle for teaching and learning content and are the responsibility of all teachers. Professional learning support for literacy in grades 6-12 has been a collaborative effort involving all core content areas, including Arts and Physical Education (Attachment 1M - Disciplinary Literacy Facilitation Guide).

Key content in mathematics trainings includes effective instructional strategies for numbers and operations in elementary grades, building deep sound knowledge of fractions and ratios and rigorous college- ready high school algebra, probability and statistics. ~~The “Explanations and Examples” section in both the Arizona Common Core Standards—Mathematics and the Arizona Common Core Standards—ELA documents helps to inform teachers of the increased rigor required to transition to the college- and career-ready standards. The explanations and examples attached to specific grade level standards in both ELA and Mathematics were developed by Arizona master teacher teams. The purpose of the Summary of Change documents is to provide educators with an “at-a-glance” summary of the content shifts from the current standards to the college- and career-ready standards.~~ A sample mathematics professional development flyer for current face-to-face professional development and webinars documents the professional learning support that has been and continues to be offered through K-12 Academic Standards at ADE (Attachment 1Ma - Spring 2015 Flyer Math). A sample agenda (Attachment 1N– Agenda Statistics 1/7/2015) from a Statistics training offered to high school Algebra teachers is also included as an example. This professional learning experience is hosted and co-facilitated by the K-12 Academic Standards High School Mathematics Specialist, an ASU Professor of Statistics, and a current High School Mathematics Teacher. This course demonstrates the commitment to providing not only content training by experts but the connection to implementation within the classroom, focused on content that is new to a specific course in high school aligned to Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards in Mathematics.

***Does the SEA intend to analyze the linguistic demands of the State’s college- and career-ready standards to inform the development of ELP standards corresponding to the college- and career-ready standards and to ensure that English Learners will have the opportunity to achieve to the college- and career-ready standards? If so, will the results be used to inform revision of the ELP standards and support English Learners in accessing the college- and career-ready standards on the same schedule as all students?***

Arizona analyzed the linguistic demands of Arizona’s college- and career-ready standards to inform the development of the 2011 English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards. Arizona’s ELP standards were written to correspond with the college- and career-ready academic standards to help ensure that the expectations for English learners prepare students to fully participate in grade level content curriculum ([www.azed.gov/english-language-learners/elps/](http://www.azed.gov/english-language-learners/elps/)). ADE employed the document entitled, “Language Demands-Academic English Language Functions,” to ensure that rigorous academic functions were an integral part of the revised ELP Standards ([www.azed.gov/wp-content/uploads/PDF/LanguageDemandsLanguageComplexities.pdf](http://www.azed.gov/wp-content/uploads/PDF/LanguageDemandsLanguageComplexities.pdf)).

~~ADE is presently engaged in further alignment review, along with the development of guidance documents for educators.~~ ADE ~~intends~~ has to further analyzed the linguistic demands of the ELP standards to drive professional development and instructional practices that clearly address the complex demands of college- and career-ready standards. ADE has established a three-phase plan for professional development and technical assistance to support Arizona’s standards implementation plan spanning 2010-2015. Phase 1 and 2 professional development opportunities for both administrators and educators, (including those teaching ELLs), specifically address differentiation and scaffolding to ensure all students achieve to the college- and career-readiness level (Attachment 10 - common-core-timeline-for-ade-11-28-2). (~~[www.azed.gov/standards-practices/files/2012/05/common-core-timeline-for-ade-11-28-2.pdf](http://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/files/2012/05/common-core-timeline-for-ade-11-28-2.pdf)~~)

In addition, Arizona’s ELL teachers learn consistent standards-based methods and strategies through ongoing professional development that can be used across grades and content areas.

Throughout the year, ADE offers specialized training for those teachers who instruct ELLs within Structured English Immersion (SEI) classrooms. The training for educators in the SEI classroom started in January of 2008 and over 5,800 educators have been trained in intensive, face-to-face sessions. ADE provides all necessary training materials to these trained educators, allowing for capacity building throughout the state by partnering with school districts and charters through Memoranda of Understanding. This training continues on a regular basis throughout the year for new educators of ELLs. Beginning in July 2011, ongoing professional development continued with face-to-face sessions and webinars dedicated to the revised ELP Standards work as aligned to ~~the Common Core State~~ Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards ([www.azed.gov/english-language-learners/online-registration-training/](http://www.azed.gov/english-language-learners/online-registration-training/)). Regularly scheduled professional development is provided throughout the year at regional locations, through webinars, and through district-specific technical assistance. Quarterly meetings are held with Practitioners of ELL instruction. The purpose of these meetings is to inform and solicit input from ELL stakeholders ([www.azed.gov/english-language-learners/pell-meeting-information/](http://www.azed.gov/english-language-learners/pell-meeting-information/)). Additionally, an annual three-day state conference brings together over ~~600~~ 700 ELL educators to learn from experts and to share best practices ([www.azed.gov/english-language-learners/2011-conference/](http://www.azed.gov/english-language-learners/2011-conference/)).



Perhaps the most significant demonstration of Arizona’s commitment to assisting ELL students is the statewide requirement that ALL Arizona certified educators acquire an endorsement that ensures they have received training in the methods of SEI. This requirement has been in place since 2005. Furthermore, state law was amended in 2006 to require the coursework for the SEI endorsement to be embedded into all State Board-approved teacher training programs.

The instructional framework of the SEI Endorsement consists of the following areas of study:

- ELL Proficiency Standards
- Data Analysis and Application
- Formal and informal assessment.
- SEI Foundations
- Learning experiences: SEI Strategies
- Parent/Home/School Scaffolding

The language arts strategies and methods presented through the SEI endorsement are evidence-based and applicable for all students. Arizona’s ELL population is concentrated in the lower grades, with nearly 50% of all ELLs in grades K-2. By ensuring they are equipped with sufficient language skills to be successful in their grade level classrooms, former ELLs in this age group are now outperforming their non-ELL peers once they exit the ELL program. High standards, explicit instruction, strong accountability measures, highly qualified and trained teachers, and most importantly, high expectations for ELL students are leading to improved outcomes for Arizona students.

***Does the SEA intend to analyze the learning and accommodation factors necessary to ensure that students with disabilities will have the opportunity to achieve to the college- and career-ready standards? If so, will the results be used to support students with disabilities in accessing the college- and career-ready standards on the same schedule as all students?***

Arizona is analyzing the learning and accommodation factors necessary to ensure that students with disabilities will have the opportunity to achieve to the college- and career-ready standards. ADE established an Accommodation Taskforce to focus on how accommodations are being implemented during instruction and testing. The purpose of the taskforce is to recommend clarifications to state policy around testing accommodations; to develop a plan for training and dissemination of critical information to stakeholders regarding universal design, accessibility features, online tools, and testing accommodations for English Language Learners, students receiving special education services, and students with 504 plans. Data will be collected about accommodation use during the implementation of the new statewide assessments and alternate assessments. The analysis of this data will further help inform future test development.

Arizona served as a governing member of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), and is very supportive of assessing all students including students with disabilities. ADE has two staff members on the Operational Working Group in the PARCC assessment consortium for Accessibility, Accountability, and Fairness (one serves as chair). This group is tasked with ensuring the accessibility and fairness of the PARCC assessment for all

~~students, including those with disabilities and those with limited English.~~ However, Arizona Revised Statute §15-741 requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to adopt and implement a test to measure pupil achievement, ~~according to state procurement code (A.R.S. Title 41, Chapter 23).~~ Therefore it was necessary for the SBE to submit a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a new assessment aligned with the fully implemented **Arizona College and Career Ready Standards** for use in School Year 2014-2015. ADE withdrew from the PARCC consortium once the RFP was posted.

On March 6, 2014, the State Board adopted a statement of values (Attachment 1AA - adopted-essential-assessment-values-6mar14 ) that was used as the basis for the requirements of the Request for Proposals (RFP). These values included an assurance the assessment will be accessible to all students with optimal access to students with special needs and English Language Learners. Prior to the adoption, the values were vetted by parents, educators, and business and community leaders.

Arizona was the funding state for Project Longitudinal Examination of Alternate Assessment Progressions (LEAAP). LEAAP is an analysis of curricular progressions and student performance across grades on states' alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS) for students with significant cognitive disabilities. LEAAP allowed states to examine student progress over time – in both performance and skills assessed. Western Carolina University managed all project activities with oversight by ADE and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. This project also included partners from Maryland, South Dakota, and Wyoming. LEAAP informed states' future improvements in AA-AAAS systems, including accessibility and validity. The results of the analysis provided detailed information about Arizona's current Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards Alternate (AIMS A) and the relationship between the Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards and Arizona's Alternate Academic Standards. The results will further provide guidance on how to support teachers' transition from using the alternate standards to the Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards for instructional purposes.

ADE staff with expertise in Special Education is also engaged in the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) which is an assessment consortium working on the development of an alternate for students with significant cognitive disabilities. This assessment will be administered in grades 3-8 and high school. Three staff members are on the NCSC work groups (Assessment, Curriculum and Instruction, Professional Development) and one serves on the management team. Arizona ~~is on target for meeting the Year 1 goal by identifying~~ 33 Community of Practice (COP) members who have begun to receive training on the **ECSS College and Career Ready Standards**, the relationship among content and achievement standards, curriculum, assessment, and access to the general curriculum. The COPs ~~will be asked to implement~~ have been implementing model curricula and assisting ADE in providing continued trainings across the state to teachers serving students with significant intellectual disabilities.

As mentioned previously, the State of Arizona has adopted the Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards (AZCCRS) for ELA and Mathematics. Therefore it is also required to administer a new alternate assessment aligned to these standards. Arizona joined The National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) a project led by five centers and 24 states (13 core states and 11 Tier II states) to build an alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS) for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The goal of the NCSC project is to ensure that students with the most significant cognitive disabilities achieve increasingly higher academic outcomes and leave high school ready for post-secondary options.

Arizona State Board of Education adopted the NCSC Alternate Assessments for ELA and Mathematics and it was administered as the operational test for spring 2015.

Through the development of Arizona's State Systemic Improvement Plan as a part of our State Performance Plan, the Exceptional Student Services (ESS) section ~~is in the~~ has established a process of analyzing all relevant data (state assessment tests, local district assessments and data, Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) data, etc.) in the area of reading. ~~in five (5) geographically different school districts. This project is being done in collaboration with the School Improvement section of the ADE and the Data Analysis Center (a technical advisory center through the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). After piloting this program the ESS and School Improvement section plan on expanding to other Public Education Agencies (PEAs).~~ In collaboration with School Improvement, Title I, and the IDEA Data Center (a technical advisory center through the Office of Special Education Programs) ESS has established professional development opportunities for Local Education Agencies to engage in this process to develop an action plan that will improve student outcomes on the standards. LEAs examine why students with disabilities are not achieving academically at the same rate as their typical peers. The LEAs then develop an action plan based on their identified needs. This plan centers on systems-thinking, which includes general education as well as special education. Results of the improvement strategies support students with disabilities in accessing the college-and career -ready standards as the improvement plan is tailor-made to resolve system challenges identified in the data analysis. School Improvement and ESS are collaborating on expansion of the system.

ADE is also providing ongoing professional development and technical assistance to special education directors and school teams to support their site transition to the ~~new~~ college- and career-ready standards and aligned assessments through implementation of research based strategies to ensure that students with disabilities are being included in the revised standards. Universal Design for Learning components are being used and built into training on strategies to provide access for all students to access the ~~revised~~ standards with appropriate accommodations and modifications. ~~Trainings also address how to align an IEP to academic grade-level standards.~~ This information is being utilized at the site level to support students with disabilities in accessing the college- and career-ready standards during classroom instruction to ensure they will be on the same schedule toward college- and career-readiness as all students.

Currently, the ESS Professional Learning and Sustainability Unit ~~the ESS Comprehensive System of Professional Development (CSPD) Unit~~ in collaboration with K-12 Academic Standards offers reading ~~and mathematics~~ capacity building trainings that embed Arizona's ~~Common Core State College and Career Ready Standards —ELA and Mathematics. At the conclusion of each concept presented, participants in mathematics trainings discuss accommodations necessary to make mathematics accessible to students with disabilities.~~ Reading trainings address the connections between instruction and ~~the new Arizona Common Core State~~ grade level ELA standards' increased rigor and need for additional support in nonfiction literacy instruction. ~~Additional trainings regarding the effective use of assistive technology in the mathematics classroom, creating classroom routines and structures for students with autism, and best practices in inclusion are readily available to Arizona educators.~~

*Does the SEA intend to conduct outreach on and dissemination of the college- and career-*

*ready standards? If so, does the SEA’s plan reach the appropriate stakeholders, including educators, administrators, families, and IHEs? Is it likely that the plan will result in all stakeholders increasing their awareness of the State’s college- and career-ready standards?*

ADE continues to conduct extensive outreach on and dissemination of the college- and career-ready standards, leveraging a wide variety of communications methods, to include the following:

- ADE’s website for ~~Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards Common Core Standards—~~ ELA and Mathematics and the ~~AzMERIT PARCC~~ assessment includes specific resources for educators, administrators, family/community, in addition to a general information handout that is available for download and distribution to all stakeholders (~~[www.azed.gov/standards-practices/common-core-state-standards/](http://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/common-core-state-standards/)~~; ([www.azed.gov/azccrs/](http://www.azed.gov/azccrs/)).
- Information available to the public includes Arizona’s engagement with the standards development process, critical messaging explaining the “why” and “what” of the standards, what the new college- and career-ready standards mean for students, educators and families along with links to additional informational resources. The website also houses a college- and career-ready FAQ page that is regularly updated.
- ADE content specialists are very engaged in participating and presenting at conferences across the state, along with attending state and regional stakeholder meetings and Local Educational Agency (LEA) leadership team meetings. Conference presentations have included Arizona School Board Association, Arizona School Administrators Association, Charter School Association, Arizona Business and Education Consortium, Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Arizona Hispanic Educator Association, Arizona International Dyslexia Association, Rio Salado Community College Reading Institute.
- ADE, the Governor’s office, and County Education Superintendents have partnered to provide regional summits across the state to promote awareness and begin local discussions and regional action plans (*See Consultation Section*). Represented at these summits were educational leaders, business partners, higher education representatives, and interested community members. Staff from ADE, the Governor’s office and the County Superintendent’s office presented information on the college- and career-ready standards to raise awareness, garner local commitment to implementation and to encourage dialogue across educational, business and community stakeholders.
- ADE is facilitating Arizona’s ~~College and Career Ready Standards~~ Leadership Team. Membership includes representatives for higher education institutions, the Arizona Board of Regents, Charter School Board, School Superintendents, County Education Offices, teachers, the Governor’s office, philanthropic foundations and ADE executive team members. The purpose of the team is to play a pivotal role in building statewide capacity and support for the new standards, broaden communication systems and engage in broad based strategic planning to ensure that all Arizona students are prepared to succeed in college and careers. The team meets bi-monthly to determine the progress to date in rolling out the college- and career-ready standards, the contributions of the members and the next steps of support.

- ~~• The ADE, in coordination with Arizona Higher Education PARCC leadership, conducted in October 2010 a summit to engage higher education stakeholders in the college and career-ready standards and assessments. There are plans to hold future summits to further engage higher education in addition to providing specific technical assistance training at the request of higher education institutions.~~
- ~~• In addition to the ongoing summits, a Higher Education steering committee has been established with well-rounded representation from institutions across the state. A strategic plan for postsecondary engagement is in development and includes the immediate work of identifying expert content faculty in ELA and Mathematics who will engage in collaborative work with ADE. A subcommittee of this team is developing and disseminating information and guidance documents to Higher Education faculty to support and connect their work to the college and career-ready standards. Arizona's HIEs continue to participate in professional development provided through Arizona's PARCC governing membership to ensure the collaborative work with ADE and high school systems is successful.~~
- ADE is systematically building statewide capacity by establishing a statewide cadre of certified trainers. Master educators who meet the application perquisites receive additional ongoing training to prepare them to provide ADE's Phase 1 and 2 Professional Development Content. Cadre members are available to provide professional development at the local, regional (through Arizona's five Regional Education Centers) and state level. In their capacity as state cadre members, they also have the responsibility to conduct outreach to additional stakeholders including parents and community members. These "certified" ADE trainers will assist in communicating one common voice for change across the state, and are updated regularly as new resources are developed and added to the existing training. Currently, certified trainers are available within each of the fifteen Arizona counties. Careful attention has been given to ensure a consistent degree of high-quality professional development is available to rural areas, including LEAs on our Native American reservations. Similar attention has been given to Arizona's border counties serving our mobile migrant populations.
- ADE staff ~~will also~~ collaborates closely with Staff from Arizona's five Regional Education Centers to support implementation and transition efforts with the college- and career-ready standards and to ensure a consistent message is delivered across all five regions of Arizona. Regional Education Center staff, along with state standards training cadre members, will provide ongoing professional development and technical assistance within their specific region at the request of LEAs and specific stakeholders. ~~ADE meets monthly with Regional Centers (RIST team) to discuss implementation plans, strategies, concerns, and progress in providing professional development and resources aligned to the standards. See Attachment 1P - RIST Agenda 7-24-14 and Attachment 1Q - RIST Virtual Meeting 7-24-14 for examples of a typical meeting and agenda.~~
- ~~• ADE staff will also collaborate closely with Staff from Arizona's five Regional Education Centers to support implementation and transition efforts with the college and career-ready standards and to ensure a consistent message is delivered across all five regions of Arizona. Regional Education Center staff, along with state standards training cadre members, will provide ongoing professional development and technical assistance within their specific region at the~~



~~request of LEAs and specific stakeholders.~~

- ADE staff is being trained in the development of online course design and facilitation in order to provide even greater access to training across the state of Arizona. Additionally, weekly webinars ~~are scheduled to begin~~ began in early March 2012 to assist in answering questions and to provide ongoing assistance with critical issues, training, and topics of interest regarding the college- and career-ready standards. These topics ~~will~~ include addressing the English language learner, students with disabilities, low-achieving students, and information regarding both formative and summative assessment measures and how to use data to inform instruction.

*Does the SEA intend to provide professional development and other supports to prepare teachers to teach all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, to the new standards? If so, will the planned professional development and supports prepare teachers to teach to the new standards, use instructional materials aligned with those standards, and use data on multiple measures of student performance (e.g., data from formative, benchmark, and summative assessments) to inform instruction?*

ADE ~~has begun and will~~ continues to provide professional development and other supports to prepare teachers to teach the college- and career-ready standards to ALL students in order to close achievement gaps and increase academic success. ADE established a three phase professional development plan incorporating information for educators of all children including those with at-risk factors incorporating knowledge of the standards by grade level, significant shifts in instructional focus, effective instructional strategies, integrated content instruction and the purposeful use of data. Phases 1, 2, and 3 training continues with Phase 1 trainings being phased out, since the state is in full implementation of Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards for the 2014-2015 school year. Phase 2 and Phase 3 professional development experiences continue to increase in number through face-to-face experiences and webinars. Included on the K-12 Academic Standards website are a Phase 1, 2, and 3 Professional Development checklist for ELA (Attachment 1R ela\_phases123pdchecklist-table\_10102013) and a Phase 1, 2, 3 professional development checklist for mathematics (Attachment 1S math\_phases123pdchecklist-table\_10102013). ~~Professional development opportunities are provided in a variety of formats including on-site and conference-based training, online courses, and webinars. ADE has been providing Phase 1 training since November 2010 ([www.azed.gov/standards-practices/files/2012/05/common-core-timeline-for-ade-11-28-2.pdf](http://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/files/2012/05/common-core-timeline-for-ade-11-28-2.pdf)). Phase 1 professional development focuses on building awareness of Arizona's Common Core Standards—ELA and Mathematics. Phase 1 training is provided during 1–2 day conferences in sessions designed to equip participants with the information and resources needed to duplicate presented modules at the local LEA level. ADE also provides online courses based on the same modules presented during 1–2-day conferences to reach a broader audience. Phase 1 professional development also targets administrators and educational leaders by offering professional development focused on implementation and transition efforts at the LEA level. Informational technical assistance sessions are also part of Phase 1 professional development and are provided in response to LEA or other stakeholder requests. For more detailed information, please see: [www.azed.gov/standards-practices/](http://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/), 'Content Area Resource Pages'.~~

~~The ADE has been providing Phase 2 professional development since August 2014 ([www.azed.gov/standards-practices/files/2012/05/common-core-timeline-for-ade-11-28-2.pdf](http://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/files/2012/05/common-core-timeline-for-ade-11-28-2.pdf)).~~

~~Phase 2 professional development focuses on deepening educator’s knowledge of, and purposeful implementation of Arizona’s Common Core Standards — ELA and Mathematics. Phase 2 professional development targets the in-depth study of content, rigor, text complexity, literacy integration through Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), and mathematical practices. Specific strategies to assist English learners, students with disabilities, low-achieving students, and gifted or high-achieving students will also be addressed during Phase 2 professional development.~~

~~The ADE will begin Phase Three training in August 2013 ([www.azed.gov/standards-practices/files/2012/05/common-core-timeline-for-ade-11-28-2.pdf](http://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/files/2012/05/common-core-timeline-for-ade-11-28-2.pdf)). This training will focus on full implementation of Arizona’s Common Core Standards — ELA and Mathematics, including STEM integration, differentiation, scaffolding, and the effective use of multiple assessment measures including formative, benchmark and summative student achievement data. ADE will continue to provide technical assistance and professional development as requested by stakeholder groups and will offer content-specific professional development on instructional strategies, as determined by LEA and stakeholder needs.~~

Professional development is a primary component of successful implementation for Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards and continues to be a collaborative effort among various sections within the ADE, including: K-12 Academic Standards, Office of English Language Acquisition Services, Early Childhood Education, Highly Effective Teachers and Leaders, and Career and Technical Education. Additionally, collaborative sections within ADE provide a two-day teacher conference in the summer that focuses on knowledge and implementation of the standards for all students. Differentiated professional development, technical assistance, and support continue to be provided based on the diverse and specific needs of educators and students in local regions and counties. A variety of examples have been included to demonstrate the ongoing collaborative commitment to providing quality professional growth opportunities that supports teachers in meeting the needs of all students.

The ADE two-day Teachers Institute (Attachment 1T - 2015 Teachers Institute webpage) specifically for teachers occurs in July. This collaborative effort brings in national and state level speakers with a focus on all students. July 2015 marks the second summer this conference for around 400 has been planned.

The Office of English Language Acquisition Services (OELAS) sponsors a state level conference every year in December. Collaborative presentations between different sections are a key component of this conference. OELAS and K-12 Mathematics Standards have collaboratively presented at the OELAS conference and in other conference venues sponsored by the state (Attachment 1U - ELL and Math 2014 Conference Descriptions).

Use of instructional materials has been approached through the EQuIP rubric. ELA and mathematics as well as combination trainings provided by K-12 Academic Standards Specialists have been provided for teacher preparation programs at ASU as well as state level trainings, and district/school specific trainings. The EQuIP rubric allows for evaluation of lessons/units for alignment not only to the standards but to the instructional shifts associated with instruction of Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards (Attachment 1V - Agenda - EQuIP TUSD 1-6-15).

Multiple collaborative experiences that bring together high school ELA and Mathematics teachers, Teacher Preparatory Professors and Higher Education Content Specialists have been made possible with funding from the Arizona Governor's office with support from the Arizona Board of Regents. The CCRP or College and Career Ready Partnership began with initial meetings in July 2014. Facilitation was provided by the K-12 Standards Section, Higher Education Content Specialists and Teacher Preparation Professors and Teachers (Attachment 1W - July 18 Initial AZCCRP Meeting Agenda). Collaborative efforts continue in ELA with the development of twelfth grade ELA modules/units that will provide exemplary resources for this course in high school (Attachment 1X - CCRP Transition Course Project Meeting Agenda 2-27-15).

Formative Assessment has been a central focus for K-12 Academic Standards in collaboration with other sections within ADE since the winter of 2014. ADE works closely with Margaret Heritage and WestEd to provide experiences for teachers and administrators with a central definition of Formative Assessment accompanied by resources as a central component for instructional planning. Currently ADE K-12 Academic Standards, WestEd and Margaret Heritage are working collaboratively with other western states to pilot an online course that focuses on team support for instructional planning with an emphasis on Formative Assessment. Several districts from Arizona will be part of a select group from the partner states that will offer this online course to participating teams in September 2015 (Attachment 1Y - Heritage WestEd Invite Formative Assessment Practices).

Arizona has legislation that requires LEAs to utilize a comprehensive assessment system in their schools. This is defined in State Board Policy as an assessment system that includes screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring, and outcome data. To support LEAs in utilizing effective strategies to not only gather the necessary data but use it purposefully to inform instruction, ADE collaboratively developed a model for a multi-tiered system of instruction/intervention previously referred to as AZRTI. Currently there is a multi-unit workgroup developing ADE's multi-tier system of supports (MTSS). Members include representatives from OELAS, Title I, School Improvement, Early Childhood, Assessment, ESS, K-12 Academic Standards, and School Safety. This group has been tasked with updating the RTI webpage and framework for MTSS.

The work has been divided into three phases. Phase One, which is completed, involved updating the mission, vision, beliefs, tiers of support, and decision making model. Presently the workgroup is in Phase Two, which includes developing definitions to include common language throughout the Agency and Arizona LEAs. These definitions include a common understanding for assessment, and creating a MTSS Rubric that focuses on six areas of MTSS: evidenced based decision making, leadership, integration and sustainability, assessments, instruction, and curriculum. When completed in May, this rubric will be the framework for the rest of the work being done by the MTSS workgroup. Another subgroup in ESS is presently working on a decision making tool for specific learning disabilities (SLD). Phase Three is scheduled to begin in August, 2015 and includes an implementation guide for behavior, progress monitoring tools and databases, a state structure for support and resources for the field, and input from the field.

~~ADE continues to conduct Response to Intervention (RTI) training to K-12 Arizona educators to encourage use of data on multiple measures of student performance to inform instruction. Current~~ This professional development places an emphasis on the implementation of the college- and career-ready standards in Tier 1 which is defined as universal instruction to all students in the grade level



classroom. Strategies for differentiated instruction are included along with implications and strategies for Tier 2 (intervention) and Tier 3 (intensive intervention). ~~To further support educators in successfully implementing the college- and career-ready standards, ADE will be providing Data Summits specifically designed to address effective strategies in gathering, analyzing and using multiple measures to inform both the teacher and the learner on progress (<http://www.azed.gov/mtss/>).~~

***Does the SEA intend to provide professional development and supports to prepare principals to provide strong, supportive instructional leadership based on the new standards? If so, will this plan prepare principals to do so?***

The ADE ~~has a~~ continues the three-phase professional development plan for administrators and educational leaders in both ELA and Mathematics to support strong instructional leadership based on the new standards ([Attachment 1O - common-core-timeline-for-ade-11-28-2](#)). The focus of Phase 1 trainings includes the structure of the new standards, significant shifts, and a framework for scaffolded implementation. Professional development during Phases 2 and 3 focuses on effective instructional strategies, intentional classroom observations that support the implementation plan, the effective use of multiple data points, coaching, and the use of professional learning communities at the LEA level. Phases 2 and 3 provide administrators with ongoing professional development and follow-up technical assistance as the college- and career-ready standards are implemented at the LEA level. ~~The ADE provided 3-day Leadership Institutes (Fall 2013, Spring 2014, and Winter 2015) to support school and LEA level leadership in understanding how standards, assessment, and evaluation systems interconnect. These sessions were facilitated by the K-12 Standards, Assessment, and Highly Effective Teachers and Leaders sections for approximately 40 participants (Attachment 1Z - Leadership Institute Agenda 2-9-15). At the end of each day, attendees were provided the opportunity to learn about best practices from administrators who had successfully implemented the standards and instructional shifts in their districts and schools. This structure allows leaders to learn from each, encourages leaders to build networks of support and disseminates effective, proven educational pedagogy across the state.~~

In addition to targeted professional development for site and district leaders, ADE and Arizona's five Regional Education Centers will establish regional professional networking groups that provide regular opportunities for collaborative problem solving, the sharing of successful strategies, and the opportunity to learn from the collective intelligence of the group. Membership in these networking groups will include LEA superintendents, school principals, site coaches and lead teachers. Meetings will be coordinated by the Regional Education Center staff and will be held on a quarterly basis. Agendas will be focused on the implementation of the college- and career-ready standards while specific topics will be determined by the local needs and priorities. ADE content staff will provide support and resources to these network teams. The purpose will be to build capacity, support and sustainability for effective educational practice across the state. Beyond the necessary professional development will be the shared critical conversations among peers and colleagues that secure implementation and support the change process. Communities of Practice will be facilitated by Regional Education Center staff with the intent of building a two-way line of communication from this COP to the Regional Education Centers to ADE and also in the turnaround direction.

***Does the SEA propose to develop and disseminate high-quality instructional materials aligned with the new standards? If so, are the instructional materials designed (or will they***

*be designed) to support the teaching and learning of all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students?*

Arizona teacher teams with support from K-12 Academic Standards have developed and ADE has ~~Arizona intends to develop and~~ disseminated high quality instructional materials aligned with the new college- and career-ready standards and based on Universal Design for Learning guidelines, frameworks and examples. These materials ~~will~~ include sample instructional units, lesson plans, curriculum maps, and formative assessments that reflect research-based best practices. ADE ~~will~~ has drawn ~~and will continue to draw~~ on the experience of local curriculum leaders and master educators to assist in the development of these materials which ~~will be~~ are available online through the [ADE website](#). ADE will coordinate the establishment of grade-span work teams who will develop grade specific instructional materials. Pertinent Phase 2 and 3 professional development sessions will utilize these resources as exemplars, coaching materials and foundations for post professional development targeted webinars to extend and reinforce the professional learning. These materials will be developed to support teaching and learning of all students, and will provide instructional strategies that support differentiation and scaffolding for students, including English language learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students. ~~ADE has also links to Arizona district resources, which include~~ [exemplar curriculum maps](#) and [mathematical practice](#) resources.

~~Arizona has been actively engaging educators throughout the process of reviewing, adopting and implementing the college- and career-ready standards. As ADE supports the movement of LEAs towards full implementation in the school year 2013-2014, master educators will continue to work in grade span teams for two specific purposes: 1) to review and identify Open Educational Resources (OER) using the rubrics and evaluation tools provided by ACHIEVE, and 2) to develop targeted grade-level professional development that addresses specific content in both the ELA and Mathematics standards. The teacher-driven professional development will be provided in regional face-to-face meetings, webinars and online courses to ensure access.~~

~~Arizona is a member of an e-learning consortium, E-Learning for Educators (which includes 12 states) whose purpose is to share state-developed online resources and collaboratively develop additional resources. Presently ADE content specialists are reviewing consortium resources to identify sound connections to the needs of Arizona educators and providing access to this group of online resources. In addition, ADE is working collaboratively with PARCC states to share and develop common and fully aligned instructional resources.~~

*Does the SEA plan to expand access to college-level courses or their prerequisites, dual enrollment courses, or accelerated learning opportunities? If so, will this plan lead to more students having access to courses that prepare them for college and a career?*

ADE has and will continue to expand opportunities for students to access college-level courses or their prerequisites. ADE continues to champion access to advanced rigorous high school coursework to better prepare students to be college- and career-ready through a number of initiatives presently being implemented. The AP Test Fee Waiver Grant Program, a US Dept. of Education grant, supports test fees for AP and IB for eligible low-income students statewide. Low-income students in Arizona took over 9,800 AP exams through the support of this program in 2011. This represents a dramatic increase from 2004 when only 800 students took AP exams. The College Board Data Partnership builds a collaborative data sharing partnership with the College Board that

allows SAT, PSAT and AP student-level test data to be incorporated into the ADE Student Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). This allows ADE and LEAs for the opportunity for greater analysis of current student preparation, access and success in accelerated learning opportunities, and provides actionable data to support program expansion. Move on When Ready refers to state legislation that provides for accelerated rigorous learning at the early high school level that potentially allows for early graduation. Cambridge and ACT Quality Core instructional and assessment systems have been implemented in some pilot schools with the opportunity for students to move on to college when they have successfully completed the advanced college ready coursework. Dual enrollment in community college classes is also an option offered by the majority of high schools in association with the community colleges in Arizona (Arizona Revised Statutes §15-701.01 G).

In addition to expanding opportunities for college-level coursework in high school, Arizona recognizes that it is essential students have support in ensuring that they access those courses as part of a purposeful educational plan. Arizona's 2013 Education and Career Action Plan (ECAP) requirement is helping to move all students toward college- and career-readiness. Because decisions about enrollment in college-level courses will be made in the context of ECAP planning process, Arizona is working to ensure college-level high school course opportunities used effectively to support student college- and career-readiness. In support of the implementation of college- and career-ready standards, ADE staff has collaborated with the Northern Arizona University (NAU) GEARUP program and the Governor's Early College Access Grant. ~~In the fall of 2011, 32,227 students in Arizona were given the ACT EXPLORE test, providing valuable information about individual student early readiness for college, based upon skill attainment and educational and career goals. It provides relevant information to assist in the selection of appropriate high school courses and career pathway choices. LEAs (50 districts, 11 charters, 233 schools) collect the results, sharing the information with students and parents and high school counselors to ensure appropriate high school transitions and course planning. The students begin a Pre-Education and Career Action Plan (ECAP) process (defined below) using their skill scores and identified career interests.~~ LEAs are establishing methods to record scores into the school student data system, preparing for the full ~~implementation~~ implementation of Arizona's SLDS system. ACT, GEARUP and ADE staff collaborate on the planning and presentation of statewide professional development workshops to support student college- and career-readiness, purposefully connecting the EXPLORE Initiative to the ECAP process.

The 2013 Education and Career Action Plan (ECAP) requirement is moving all students toward career- and college-readiness. ADE supports the AzCIS (Arizona Career Information System) online career and college planning tool used to assist in ECAP development. It is provided free of charge to middle and high school students. The ECAP process assists students in integrating educational preparation with career interests and introduces life planning skills. As students are faced with greater opportunities for course selections, early college enrollment and early graduation options, they require greater guidance in making decisions and assuming responsibilities for their life preparation. The ECAP process is positioned to assist in increasing student academic achievement, promoting graduation and enrollment in postsecondary experiences, and linking them to their role within their own communities. ~~Every Arizona graduate beginning in the year 2013 will graduate with an action plan, designed by them, to move them closer to their career and life goals. Since 2013, every Arizona graduate will graduate with an action plan, designed by them, to move them closer to their career and life goals.~~ To support the effective implementation of ECAPS for all students in

middle and high school the following is being done:

- ADE is engaged in providing professional outreach, materials and technical assistance to LEAs including leadership workshops, counselor workshops and teacher lesson plans. ADE maintains a website of resources developed in conjunction with the Arizona School Counselors Association and local teachers. Downloadable brochures are provided in English and Spanish to assist in communication with students and parents. Parents are required to be a part of this process each year.
- ADE in the fall of 2011, designed K-12 College and Career Checklists. These specific grade indicators can help parents and students identify components of college-readiness and academic success. Students are encouraged to take rigorous classes, additional mathematics coursework, and to participate in AP, Honors and dual credit opportunities. Additionally, it is suggested that students pursue all of the options available for financial aid. The link to these checklists can be found on the ECAP webpage ([www.azed.gov/ecap/](http://www.azed.gov/ecap/))
- All Title I LEAs and schools with grades 9-12, including charters, must submit Assurances and documentation of their ECAP compliance within ADE's online ALEAT system. ~~Sample evidence will be collected in 2012 relevant to the 2013 implementation validation. Information submitted will be considered in developing technical assistance and professional development efforts for 2013.~~ Schools must assure students enter, track and update the following attributes: Academic, Career, Postsecondary and Extracurricular participation at school or in their community.
  - ADE ~~staff provides coaches coaching for~~ schools to utilize student ECAPs to assist in transitioning students into community colleges and universities both during high school and following high school graduation.
  - ADE specialists in both content and special education, along with school experts responsible for the ECAP process, worked together to design guidance on the effective implementation and management of student ECAPs and IEPs. The student outcomes for an ECAP and an IEP are very similar. ALL Arizona students will have a college and career planning process to ensure post high school success with the least amount of duplication and confusion.
  - ADE high school specialists and CTE specialists are working collaboratively with all high schools offering CTE programs implement the Programs of Study Essential Elements which provide a comprehensive, structured approach for delivering academic and career technical education that prepares student for postsecondary education and career success. This process involves a sequence of instruction that begins in high school and connects through ~~into~~ postsecondary, leading to an industry recognized certification, credential or a degree. Secondary and postsecondary community colleges are working together to guide students in their high school course work and financial planning. This involves dual or concurrent credit at the postsecondary level.

ADE personnel from Highly Effective Teachers and Leaders and ESS, along with school experts responsible for the ECAP process, actively work together to design guidance on the effective implementation and management of student Education and Career Action Plans (ECAPs) and Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). As part of this effort, the AZ Career Leadership

Network was initiated in 2014. This workgroup, comprised of ADE personnel, school leaders, higher education staff, industry representatives, and other community stakeholders, is tasked with championing the development of a system in which all students become career literate through the implementation of high-quality ECAPs. The priorities of this workgroup include implementing a systems approach to ECAPs using technology, communications, and marketing, and engagement of leadership. This focus on individualized learning plans for all students is consistent with the ESS vision, which is that all students, including students with a disability, are well prepared for college, technical/trade school, career, job, or other means of engagement.

*Does the SEA intend to work with the State's IHEs and other teacher and principal preparation programs to better prepare—*

*-incoming teachers to teach all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, to the new college- and career-ready standards; and* In October 2014 the Arizona State Board of Education adopted a revised Educator Preparation Program (EPP) review and approval Rule language requiring all EPPs to provide evidence that all programs are aligned to relevant state and national standards. The Revised Rule, effective January 2015, requires evidence that all EPPs are addressing all professional and academic standards, and that intervention plans are included in all submissions for SBE approval. The revised requirements to address academic standards will improve both current content knowledge and content pedagogy of both new teacher and new leader program completers.

In 2011, ADE ~~began~~ surveyed school principals to ascertain the perceived readiness of teachers completing State Board approved teacher preparation programs in Arizona. Survey questions addressed a broad range of skills including English Learners and students with disabilities. Seventy-seven percent of teachers either met or exceeded expectations of beginning teachers to incorporate English Language Development Standards; 80% of teachers either met or exceeded expectations to differentiate instruction to meet the learning needs of all students. To address these and other findings, ADE convened a workshop with representatives from each IHE to analyze their survey results and to discuss strategies for addressing identified areas of improvement. Each IHE was then responsible for integrating their analyses and plans for improvement into their annual Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) report to the federal government. This process ~~will be~~ was continued in 2012 ~~and beyond through 2014~~ and will provide longitudinal data to measure the progress of IHEs in addressing the needs of targeted student populations.

~~In addition, the ADE works in partnership with IHEs through Arizona's federal Transition to Teaching (TTT) grant. The goal of this grant is to support the recruitment and retention of highly qualified teachers in high-need LEAs. In order to participate, LEAs cannot have less than 20% of their children in families with incomes below the poverty line and must have a high percentage of their teachers teaching out of field. Qualifying districts for the TTT grant are in Yuma, Apache and Navajo counties, all of which have high ELL student populations. The grant provides stipends and mentoring for teachers pursuing certification in special education and high-need secondary core content areas. As a result of this project, IHEs are now targeting candidate recruitment efforts towards addressing the unique needs of these LEAs.~~

*-incoming principals to provide strong, supportive instructional leadership on teaching to the new standards? If so, will the implementation of the plan likely improve the preparation*



*of incoming teachers and principals?*

In 2008, the Arizona State Board of Education directed ADE to develop a statewide framework for quality internship programs to produce principals who have the knowledge and skills to be effective instructional leaders.

As a condition of program approval, each IHE was required to attend a mandatory workshop focused on:

- Identifying research-based practices of effective internships;
- Designing and implementing a developmental, competency-based internship program; and,
- Developing and signing a university-district program agreement describing internship program specifics.

The Framework represented a major statewide effort to identify the critical features and conditions of quality internship programs with the goal of providing candidates with significant opportunities to synthesize and apply knowledge as well as to practice and develop the skills identified in national leadership standards as measured by substantial, sustained work in real settings, planned and guided cooperatively by university and school district personnel. The Framework also determined what guidance should be provided to IHEs to ensure that these features were part of a principal preparation program.

In addition, ADE ~~is currently~~ developed a new principal Arizona Educator Proficiency Exam (AEPA) aligned to the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards. IHEs are ~~now in the process of required to~~ ensure the alignment of their administrative programs to these standards as well as to sufficiently prepare their candidates to pass this rigorous exam, ~~when it becomes available in 2013.~~

*Does the SEA plan to evaluate its current assessments and increase the rigor of those assessments and their alignment with the State's college- and career-ready standards, in order to better prepare students and teachers for the new assessments through one or more of the following strategies:*

*Raising the State's academic achievement standards on its current assessments to ensure that they reflect a level of postsecondary readiness, or are being increased over time to that level of rigor? (E.g., the SEA might compare current achievement standards to a measure of postsecondary readiness by back-mapping from college entrance requirements or remediation rates, analyzing the relationship between proficient scores on the State assessments and the ACT or SAT scores accepted by most of the State's 4-year public IHEs, or conducting NAEP mapping studies.)*

*Augmenting or revising current State assessments by adding questions, removing questions, or varying formats in order to better align those assessments with the State's college- and career-ready standards?*

~~The ADE has evaluated its current state assessment, Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS), and has begun increasing the depth of knowledge of all field-tested items and aligning new~~

~~item development to college- and career-ready standards. Passages for the AIMS Reading will be commissioned, public domain, or primary source with a focus on expository text with higher test complexity. At this time text complexity is being determined by Lexile and various other measures indicated within Readability Suite ([www.azed.gov/standards-development-assessment/files/2011/12/azainsdpa-hslinkingstudyreport-final.pdf](http://www.azed.gov/standards-development-assessment/files/2011/12/azainsdpa-hslinkingstudyreport-final.pdf)). Arizona strives to use Universal Design in the development of assessment items and the assessment format in order to assess the full range of student abilities while maintaining high expectations for all students. All students are expected to participate in the state assessment system (<http://www.azed.gov/research-evaluation/files/2012/08/statereportcard2010.pdf>). Additionally, items in the current bank are being aligned to the new standards for college- and career-readiness. An alignment study of items in the current AIMS Item Bank is being conducted in March 2012 to determine alignment of the items to the adopted college- and career-ready standards. New items are being written to the more global concept level in order to combine current performance objectives to more closely align to the complexity and expectation of the college- and career-ready standards. Item writers are encouraged to write multiple choice items at level 2 or 3 depth of knowledge level, as determined by Norman Webb’s guidance, to increase rigor within the current state assessment and to help transition both students and teachers to college- and career-readiness expectations. All items field tested on the 2012 AIMS were at level 2 or higher ([www.azed.gov/standards-development-assessment/files/2011/12/aims\\_tech\\_report\\_2011\\_final.pdf](http://www.azed.gov/standards-development-assessment/files/2011/12/aims_tech_report_2011_final.pdf)).~~

A.R.S. (Arizona Revised Statutes) §15-741 requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to adopt and implement a test to measure student achievement. A new assessment aligned with the fully implemented College and Career Ready Standards was selected the 2014-2015 School Year.

On March 6, 2014, the SBE adopted a statement of values (Attachment 1AA -adopted-essential-assessment-values-6mar14) that was used as the basis for the requirements of the Request for Proposals (RFP) (<https://procure.az.gov/bso/external/bidDetail.sdo?bidId=ADED14-00004144>). Feedback from parents, educators, and business and community leaders was incorporated in the document.

In June 2014, the RFP for the new statewide assessment was released, and responses were due in July 2014. At the time of the release, Arizona withdrew as a governing state from the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career consortium. As allowed by Arizona procurement law, an independent evaluation team was assembled to review vendor proposals, assess the extent to which proposals address the requirements listed in the RFP, and recommend contract award to vendor that best addressed the state’s requirements. The evaluation team unanimously recommended the private, not-for-profit American Institutes for Research (AIR) (<http://www.azed.gov/state-board-education/new-statewide-assessment>) to the State Board of Education, which announced the selection of AIR. The new state assessment, Arizona’s Measurement of Educational Readiness to Inform Teaching (AzMERIT), is managed by ADE and measures Arizona’s standards (<http://www.azed.gov/assessment/azmerit/>).

AzMERIT is being developed with the intent that scoring proficient on AzMERIT, or passing AzMERIT, has a similar meaning to scoring proficient or passing other tests aligned to the Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards. The development of Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) has been designed to support this intent.



The State Board will adopt the names for the 4 proficiency levels of AzMERIT and the policy level PLDs. The wording of these policy PLDs has been informed by the wording of the policy PLDs for other assessments aligned to the Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards.

Draft PLDs for use with standard setting and reporting are being written based on the existing PLDs for other assessments aligned to the Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards. ADE will offer a virtual training on the uses and purposes of PLDs to all Arizona educators who are interested in participating. From that group of Arizona educators, up to 100 subject matter experts per grade and content area will review and endorse or revise the draft PLDs, ensuring they represent Arizona’s expectations for student proficiency and demonstrate the appropriate rigor to demonstrate that students are on track to be college- and career-ready upon graduation. In addition to Arizona educators reviewing the PLDs, representatives from IHEs will be invited to review the 11<sup>th</sup> grade PLDs and provide input about the proficiency expectations and how it matches what students need to know when entering credit bearing post-secondary courses.

*Implementing another strategy to increase the rigor of current assessments, such as using the “advanced” performance level on State assessments instead of the “proficient” performance level as the goal for individual student performance or using college-preparatory assessments or other advanced tests on which IHEs grant course credits to entering college students to determine whether students are prepared for postsecondary success?*

The State is exploring the possibility of giving a “reach for college- and career-readiness” score to students, but we have not finalized the research to support this information. The College and Career Ready Partnership meetings will also investigate postsecondary pathways to ensure student success.

*If so, is this activity likely to result in an increase in the rigor of the State’s current assessments and their alignment with college- and career-ready standards?*

All of these strategies are designed to increase the rigor of the current assessment system, AIMS. The goal is to have educators and students in the state to be aware of the rigor of Arizona’s ~~Common Core State~~ College and Career Ready Standards – ELA and Mathematics and its impact on an aligned assessment system (~~PARCC~~).

*Does the SEA propose other activities in its transition plan? If so, is it likely that these activities will support the transition to and implementation of the State’s college- and career-ready standards?*

ADE is working to align and integrate efforts to implement and support both the implementation of the new college- and career-ready standards, and teacher and principal evaluation initiatives. Currently, ADE is developing a single, integrated plan to bring strategic cohesion to these major initiatives, which would include (but are not limited to) the development of aligned, common messaging and the integration of professional development and technical support efforts. A specific example of an action step from this process would include the collaborative (ADE standards and educator effectiveness staff, Regional Centers, and other stakeholders) development of a common tool/rubric for measuring the fidelity of implementation of the standards, which aligns with

observation tools/instruments needed to support educator evaluation systems. In addition, ADE held six Arizona ~~will begin planning a fourth AZ Educator~~ Evaluation Summits from Fall 2011 to Spring 2015, focusing on bridging ~~Common Core State~~ Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards instructional shifts and educator evaluation ~~to be held in late summer or early Fall of 2012~~. The most recent, Summit VI - Designing Comprehensive Evaluation Systems: *Leading the Design and Implementation of a Comprehensive System to Improve Teaching and Learning*, was held in collaboration with the West Comprehensive Center (WCC) on March 1-2, 2015.

## 1.C DEVELOP AND ADMINISTER ANNUAL, STATEWIDE, ALIGNED, HIGH-QUALITY ASSESSMENTS THAT MEASURE STUDENT GROWTH

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide evidence corresponding to the option selected.

<p><b>Option A</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The SEA is participating in one of the two State consortia that received a grant under the Race to the Top Assessment competition.</p> <p>i. Attach the State's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) under that competition. <del>(Attachment 6)</del></p>	<p><b>Option B</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The SEA is not participating in either one of the two State consortia that received a grant under the Race to the Top Assessment competition, and has not yet developed or administered statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs.</p> <p>i. Provide the SEA's plan to develop and administer annually, beginning no later than the 2014–2015 school year, statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs, as well as set academic achievement standards for those assessments.</p>	<p><b>Option C</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The SEA has developed and begun annually administering statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs.</p> <p>i. Attach evidence that the SEA has submitted these assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review or attach a timeline of when the SEA will submit the assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review. <del>(Attachment 7)</del></p>
--	--	---

## **Overview**

Arizona initially satisfied principle 1.C via Option A above through its participation in the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) consortium. Arizona participated in PARCC from its inception until May 29, 2014. ~~The original memorandum of understanding governing Arizona's participation in PARCC is attached as Attachment 6.~~ Upon entering into a formal procurement process, ~~The~~ ADE, in consultation with the Arizona governor, elected to withdraw from PARCC for reasons related to the procurement process required by Arizona law. Arizona retains the Arizona **College and Career Ready Standards** (ACCRS) adopted in 2010, and that satisfy the requirements of Principle 1.A. The State Board of Education ~~is currently in the process of procuring~~ **has procured** an assessment aligned to those standards in accordance with Arizona law. Because Arizona is no longer a member of PARCC, the following will outline Arizona's plan to adopt and implement an assessment aligned with Arizona's **College and Career Ready Standards**.

## **Historical Context**

The Arizona State Board of Education (SBE) adopted Arizona's **College and Career Ready Standards**, based on the ~~Common Core~~ State Standards, in 2010. In June 2010, ADE entered into the PARCC consortium for development of a next-generation assessment. Arizona remained a governing state in PARCC through the field test conducted in the Spring of 2014. Throughout 2013 and into 2014, Arizona representatives to PARCC repeatedly raised concerns that the state's procurement laws would not allow SBE to unilaterally award a testing contract to PARCC without a competitive bid process, and that despite Arizona's status within PARCC, the consortium would likely have to compete against other commercial vendors in a public bidding process.

Concurrently, political pressure against the standards and the PARCC consortium in particular continued to build within the state, such that even if a unilateral contract award were possible, it became clear that such a maneuver would all but certainly provoke immediate legislative action to block its implementation. In addition to a flurry of standards-related legislation, three different members of the Arizona Legislature introduced measures aimed directly at new standards-aligned assessments, one of which specifically prohibited PARCC by name (See <http://www.azleg.gov/legtext/51leg/2r/bills/sb1095p.pdf>).

In late 2013, SBE released a Request for Information (RFI) inviting those interested in bidding on a new statewide assessment to respond. This RFI clearly stated the SBE's intent that the assessment be aligned to the ACCRS, and that it be fully implemented in the 2014-2015 academic year. SBE received six responses to the RFI, including one from Pearson on behalf of PARCC.

In early to mid 2014, SBE began preparing for the release of the request for proposals (RFP) to solicit bids for the statewide assessment. At the same time, following the 2014 field test, discussions at PARCC were moving toward full implementation for 2014-2015. ADE felt that continued active participation in the PARCC consortium would make the outcome appear pre-ordained should PARCC win the contract. This would almost certainly spark at the very least a procurement challenge by a competing vendor, at worst a new round of political backlash, further endangering or at least delaying the new assessment system rollout and perhaps threatening the standards altogether. It was at this point that ADE, SBE, and the governor's office jointly agreed to formally withdraw from

PARCC prior to the release of the RFP. It was felt that Arizona had gained all the value it could gain from the consortium without fully implementing PARCC and, given the necessity of conducting a competitive bid and awarding a contract before implementation of any assessment, it seemed the responsible thing to do.

Responses to the SBE statewide assessment RFP were due on July 18, 2014, ~~and the evaluation of responses is underway.~~

### **State Plan**

Arizona intends to comply with principle 1.C. via option B by adopting and implementing a high quality assessment aligned to Arizona's **College and Career Ready Standards** in the 2014-2015 school year, selected from the respondents to the RFP issued by the State Board. The specific requirements for all respondents are listed in the solicitation, and comply with the requirements set forth in option B, according to the table below:

**Table 1.2 Arizona Statewide Assessment RFP Provisions**

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Corresponding RFP Provision</b>	<b>RFP Reference</b>
Implementation in 2014-2015	Supply criterion referenced summative assessments for grades 3 through 8, and criterion referenced End-of-Course assessments in identified high school mathematics and English language arts courses for implementation in the 2014-15 school year	Pp. 20, Sec. B
Aligned to ACCRS ELA/L and mathematics	The Offeror shall provide the ADE with a criterion referenced achievement test that aligns to and measures mastery of the ACCRS in ELA/L and mathematics, for administration to Arizona public school students.	Pp. 32, Sec. C.2
High quality assessment	All language	Pp. 33, Sec. C.3, pp. 35, Sec. C.3.3, pp. 36, Sec. C.3.5, pp. 51, Sec. C.6, Sec. C.6.2, pp. 63, Sec. C.7.2
Measure growth in ELA/L and mathematics	establish vertical scales for ELA/L and mathematics assessments,	Pp. 51, Sec. C.6

	<p>equate the tests across years and equate test forms within years, as appropriate,</p> <p>assist in defining achievement level descriptors,</p>	
Measure growth in ELA/L and mathematics	As the State transitions to the new assessments in spring 2015, the Department requires technical assistance from the contractor so that the scales of these assessment systems can be linked to the current assessments through a special and defensible psychometric operation. The results of such linking would be used by ADE to inform and support decisions during the transition period.	Pp. 52, Sec. C.6.3
Grades 3-8, at least once in high school	<p>1. CBT and PBT in ELA/L and mathematics in Grades 3-8</p> <p>2. EOC CBT and PBT (a) in ELA/L in Grades 9-11 and (b) in mathematics in high school Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2</p>	Pp. 21, Sec. C
Set academic achievement standards for those assessments	build cut scores with criterion-referenced meaning on the new scales,	Pp. 51, Sec. C.6

As allowed by Arizona procurement law, an independent evaluation team was assembled to review vendor proposals, assess the extent to which proposals address the requirements listed in the RFP, and recommend a contract award to the vendor that best addressed the state's requirements. The evaluation team unanimously recommended the private, not-for-profit American Institutes for Research (AIR) to the State Board of Education, which confirmed the selection of AIR in November 2014.

Attachment 1AB – Double-testing waiver request: Additionally, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) is requesting a waiver from requirements in ESEA sections 1111(b)(1)(B) and 1111(b)(3)(C)(i) that, respectively, require the SEA to apply the same academic content and academic achievement standards to all public schools and public school children in the State and to administer the same academic assessments to measure the achievement of all students. The ADE

requests this waiver so that it is not required to double test a student who is not yet enrolled in high school but who takes advanced, high school level coursework to include both mathematics and English/Language Arts. ADE has no state level policy that prohibits students to access advanced level courses prior to high school. Individual LEAs can provide the opportunity for middle school students to take advanced-level courses. The ADE would assess such a student with the corresponding advanced, high school level assessment in place of the mathematics or English language arts assessment the ADE would otherwise administer to the student for the grade in which the student is enrolled. For Federal accountability purposes, the ADE will use the results of the advanced, high school level, mathematics assessment in the year in which the assessment is administered and will administer one or more additional advanced, high school level, mathematics assessments to such students in high school, consistent with the State's mathematics content standards, and use the results in high school accountability determinations. Although ELA content in grades 9 to 11 implies sequential instruction, there is no mandated sequence allowing for various instructional approaches such as block scheduling, accelerated coursework, etc. A waiver from double-testing in either ELA and/or Mathematics aligns with the intent to promote College and Career readiness and reduce administrative burden on schools. Since AZ requires four years of mathematics and ELA in order to graduate, all high school students will also be required to take the End of Course assessments – the historical AYP requirement for assessment in ELA and mathematics at least once while enrolled in high school grades. Although advanced middle school students may complete some high school level ELA and Mathematics content and the subsequent End of Course assessment prior to Grade 9, all high schools will be held accountable for assessing all students, including these advanced students, in at least one high school level End of Course test by Grade 11. ADE makes this waiver request beginning with the 2015-2016 school year. Middle school students taking high school credit courses aligned to the course content during the 2014-2015 school year will be assessed on both the high school End of Course (EOC) test for Math and/or English language arts as well as the enrolled grade-level assessment. The data will be reported for relevant federal accountability purposes and Arizona will continue to calculate participation rates for students as outlined in Principle 2.



## PRINCIPLE 2: STATE-DEVELOPED DIFFERENTIATED RECOGNITION, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND SUPPORT

### 2.A DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A STATE-BASED SYSTEM OF DIFFERENTIATED RECOGNITION, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND SUPPORT

- 2.A.i Provide a description of the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system that includes all the components listed in Principle 2, the SEA’s plan for implementation of the differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system no later than the 2012–2013 school year, and an explanation of how the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system is designed to improve student achievement and school performance, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for students.

#### Overview

Arizona’s ultimate goal is for all students—regardless of race, ethnicity, income, language or special needs—to receive an education that prepares them for the opportunities and demands of college, the workplace, and life beyond high school. This is a shared responsibility between the Arizona Department of Education (ADE), the State Board of Education (SBE), and LEAs and schools. Since the 2010-2011 school year, Arizona has used the A-F Letter Grade Accountability System to hold schools accountable during the 2011-2012, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014 school years. The ADE has implemented the A-F system approved by the SBE and within parameters outlined in A.R.S. §15-241.

The formula used to calculate A-F Letter Grades was based on a point system where academic outcomes and academic growth are weighted equally. The state’s ultimate goal for the Flexibility Request remains to hold schools accountable using a comprehensive accountability system putting ALL students on track to college- and career-readiness. With Arizona’s state accountability system as the foundation, the state can enhance the identification and recognition system and further differentiate school performance. Taken together, these changes allows us to support every school where students are struggling and create a system focused on college- and career-readiness to support continuous improvement.

In the 2011-12 school year, Arizona public schools received multiple labels designed to promote accountability: AYP/NCLB Improvement Status and Persistently Lowest-Achieving (Tier I or Tier II); an AZ LEARNS-Legacy achievement profile, Arizona Charter Schools Board Academic Dashboard labels, and an A-F Letter Grade. Each label primarily utilized statewide assessment data but emphasized different criteria, resulting in confusing and mixed signals for educators, parents and the public about Arizona schools. By reducing the many systems under which schools were held accountable, the decrease in disparate information increased the reliability and credibility of the information provided to the public.

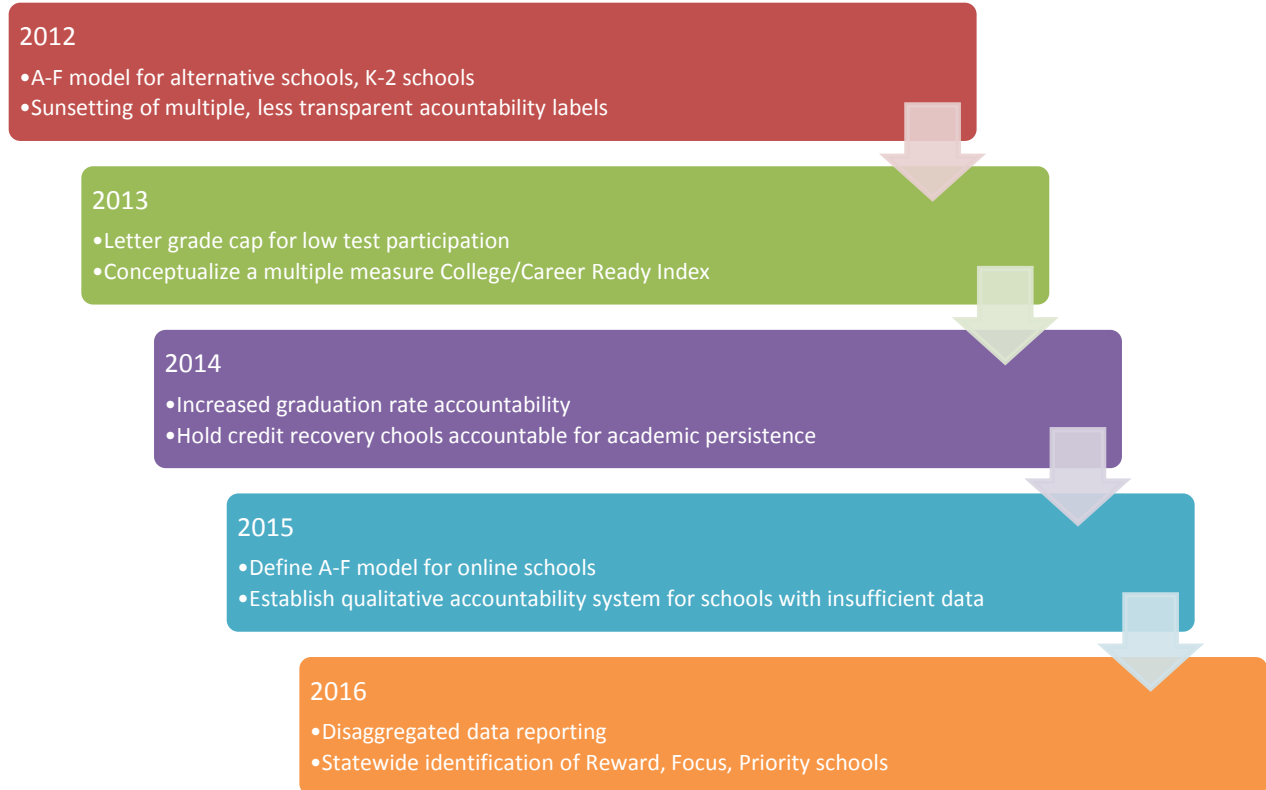
In our initial application for ESEA Flexibility, Arizona wrote: “It is clear that the current accountability systems are not connected and fail to provide Arizona’s parents, educators, or Arizona communities with a consistent message about school quality.” This position holds true. Arizona still strongly believes an accountability system must be coherent, provide meaningful

measures and reliable results to inform instruction and strengthen schools and provide accurate information to the public.

### ***Under ESEA Flexibility 2012 through Present***

Since Arizona received its first ESEA waiver, significant strides were taken to strengthen and validate the accountability system on an annual basis and the system has evolved in order to include and/or increase accountability for several measures such as test participation, on-time graduation, and credit recovery effectiveness (Figure 2A.i).

**Figure 2A.i Evolution of Arizona’s State Accountability System**



In order to ensure all schools were held accountable and received the necessary support under a parallel and/or supplemental system, Arizona developed a differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system for all schools. These schools were identified as *Not Rated* prior to the 2014-2015 school year and were often not evaluated under AYP or the AZLEARNS (pre-2011) system due to insufficient and/or unique data.

For extremely small schools which do not have sufficient data to receive an A-F letter grade (at least 30 test records pooled over the current year and two prior years) a parallel monitoring system piloted in the 2014-2015 school year. ADE created a Supplemental Accountability Committee to prepare recommendations for SBE. The committee was composed of ADE's accountability, school improvement, research and evaluation, and policy development units, a representative from the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (ASBCS), and a representative for alternative charter schools. Using a similar system applied to Arizona charter schools by the ASBCS, the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) for Schools will monitor an extremely small school's curriculum,

instruction, assessment, and teacher quality. Ultimately, the MAPs may evaluate schools which serve untested grades as well. Given their unique characteristics, the MAPs will identify extremely small schools and other schools with insufficient data in need of support or interventions. The MAPs will be released for comment to some potentially affected schools in the fall of the 2014-2015 school year followed by necessary revisions. The survey was sent to over 100 schools that were contacted twice over a two month period.

After reviewing MAP with both internal and external stakeholders, the Department initiated partnerships with graduate programs in Educational Leadership and Administration at local universities in order to recruit experienced K-12 school administrators to volunteer their professional experience to the review and rate MAP submissions. The Department partnered with the ASBCS in order to utilize the charter school's submission of their Demonstration of Sufficient Progress (DSP) for state accountability purposes as well.

For schools that do not meet the criteria for an accountability determination under the state's standard A-F Letter Grade Accountability System, ADE must use substitute criteria to ensure accountability for student outcomes in the 2013-2014 school year. The Department began researching different methods of accountability for schools with extremely insufficient student achievement data by creating of a cross-divisional committee tasked with piloting various methodologies and surveying the field for input on the development of a new system that would not increase schools' administrative burden. The result, the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP), was created to apply to:

- Schools with less than 30 test records in the last three years OR
- Brick and mortar schools that did not receive an A-F Letter Grade OR
- Schools where 95% of students or more are enrolled only up to half-time

As described in Arizona's 2014 ESEA Flexibility Request, Arizona has been developing and piloting the MAP system. Schools which do not meet criteria for accountability determinations under the A-F Letter Grade system – or for which the A-F substantive appeals committee deems necessary – will demonstrate the quality of their academic program in a qualitative manner. The proposed recommendation for Measure of Academic Progress mirrors a component of the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools Academic Performance Dashboard (Demonstration of Sufficient Progress [DSP]). In order to reduce administrative burden for charter schools, the achievement profile determined by the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (ASBCS) will be utilized by ADE includes:

- **Academic Program Introduction** - Brief description of the school's history and mission.
- **Professional Development** – An appropriate and robust Professional Development Plan and evidence showing teachers are appropriately evaluated, qualified to teach and meet state and federal guidelines for teaching in their content areas.
- **Curriculum** - Process used to create and implement a curriculum aligned to Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards (ACCRS) and how systemic processes are used, and evidence is collected, for monitoring, evaluating and implementation.
- **Instruction** - System used to monitor the integration of the ACCRS into instruction, including ensuring instruction is aligned and how students not at grade level are supported.

- **Assessment** - How student performance data is used to monitor their progress, especially underperforming students, during the year and to plan for teaching and learning.

The increased collaboration and communication between the ASBCS and ADE allows schools to focus more attention and resources on student achievement. To streamline accountability systems and reduce the administrative burden on schools, the Department developed MAP as a truncated version of the DSP to adequately cover content universal to all schools. For all schools not receiving a 2014 A-F letter grade or ASBCS label the following process will be applied:

- ADE notification of schools with no A-F grade of the use of MAP or the ASBCS DSP label as displayed on ASBCS label – ADE will coordinate DSP label with ASBCS.
- ADE verifies and provides all available data within related to student achievement and student outcomes for a MAP label.
- Schools submit narrative on their history, mission, professional development, instruction, curriculum, and assessment areas.
- ADE Accountability identifies qualified and experienced education practitioners to review and evaluate schools' submissions.
- The four areas will be independently evaluated and aggregated, (Table 2A.1.), the reviewers' ratings will be confirmed, and final MAP label will be assigned by ADE Accountability.

**Table 2A.1a. Proposed MAP Accountability Ratings for Schools with Insufficient Data**

<b>A-F equivalent</b>	<b>ASBCS label</b>	<b>ADE MAP label</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>Exceeds Standard</b>	<b>Exceeds Standard</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>Meets Standard</b>	<b>Meets Standard</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>Approaches Standard</b>	<b>Approaches Standard</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>Falls Far Below</b>	<b>Falls Far Below</b>

ADE worked with LEAs, as well as the ASBCS, in finalizing the MAP data collection tool (Attachment 2A Measures of Academic Progress). LEA personnel provided comments on multiple drafts to ensure MAP was a fair and successful accountability method for schools which lacked the quantitative data required in any A-F accountability formula. Because of a low response rate, ADE also collected survey data from schools for a two month period, which resulted in an overall agreement for MAP's purpose, methodology, and expectations. Because the MAP, as it relates to charter schools, depends on a cooperative and communicative relationship with the ASBCS, the ADE will closely monitor the alignment between MAP and ASBCS standards used for charter school accountability. At their March 2015 meeting, the State Board of Education voted unanimously to adopt this qualitative system of holding schools with insufficient assessment data accountable within the state system. Stakeholders acknowledged ADE's effort to reduce

administrative burden on schools by utilizing information already available to the Department through collaboration with the ASBCS.

The vast majority of schools which will rely on a MAP or DSP for accountability purposes are not Title I eligible due to size. While a lack of student achievement data drove the need for an ulterior method of monitoring and supporting all schools, accountability for student achievement is included the evaluation of a MAP submission. The review of MAP includes any and all student achievement data and program effectiveness information available at the state level in order to counter or support the school's submission. For example, the school's graduation rate data are compared to the state rate. ADE may include other indicators of student achievement including information related to Title III and IDEA monitoring in evaluating a MAP label. Especially when the indicators suggest below average performance, the school must address these data points in their MAP submission and include any current state-required improvement plan. Regardless of narrative descriptions of Professional Development, Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, the following data included in every MAP review would support or challenge the effectiveness in each of the areas below:

**Table 2A.1b. Student Achievement and Academic Outcomes in MAP**

<b><u>Indicator</u></b>	<b><u>School Result</u></b>	<b><u>State Average</u></b>
<b><u>Percent tested on statewide assessment</u></b>		
<b><u>3-Year percent passing on statewide assessment</u></b>		
<b><u>Average Daily Membership</u></b>		
<b><u>Average Daily Attendance</u></b>		
<b><u>4-Year Graduation rate</u></b>		
<b><u>5-Year Graduation rate</u></b>		
<b><u>Dropout rate</u></b>		
<b><u>Percent tested on AZELLA</u></b>		
<b><u>ELL reclassification percentage</u></b>		

In the absence of standardized assessment data via the state, schools are encouraged to report other valid and reliable assessment data. A school with no valid or reliable assessment data on behalf of their students would not meet the standard in one of the key areas of the MAP nor would the school be able to demonstrate effectiveness of the overall academic program on student achievement. In addition to Accountability, the cross-divisional collaboration with units such as Exceptional Student Services and the School Improvement division ensure more comprehensive and thorough consideration regardless of the self-reported information a school may choose to include.

To further demonstrate Arizona's commitment to the tenets of ESEA Flexibility and shared goals in accountability for all schools, Arizona pioneered state-developed accountability for online schools at a time when traditional accountability lags and misaligns with new modes of educational instruction (Attachment 2B- Accountability In The Digital Age). Other schools previously classified as *Not Rated* (NR) are online schools, serving less than 100 FAY students. Many online schools serve concurrently enrolled students in non-tested subjects. Consequently, ADE developed an accountability model specifically for online schools, which places a larger emphasis on accountability for non-FAY students as well as a more appropriate measure for concurrently-enrolled students. The end-of-year data gathered from all Arizona Online Instruction schools (AOI) on July 17, 2014

will be used with data from prior years to pilot an accountability framework developed in collaboration with AOI stakeholders. The end goal is an A-F label for AOI schools based on their unique student data and instructional services.

***Key issues in AOI accountability:***

- Growing number of online schools – charter and district
- Legislative requirements for student mobility adjustment (FAY)
- Dual enrolled students; retention/attrition
- AOI schools for academic remediation/acceleration/supplementation
- Ratio of Non-FAY to FAY enrollment
- Measurement of and accountability for graduation rate
- Measurement of and accountability for test participation rates
- Inclusion of parents/student satisfaction regarding technology, support, etc.
- Indicators of College and Career Readiness of AOI graduates

In Spring 2013, the State Board of Education took the first step toward recognizing the unique nature of the Arizona Online Instruction option by amending the *Full Academic Year* (FAY) definition to address ‘extent of instructional exposure’ rather than ‘calendar days enrolled.’ In the 2012-2013 school year, less than a quarter of approved AOIs (both district and charter) were included in the A-F Letter Grade Accountability System, which primarily utilizes data from FAY students only. By evaluating FAY status based on number of minutes of instruction, the AOI FAY definition aligned with the statutory requirements under A.R.S. §15-808 and addressed the student mobility issues unique to online education.

While most brick and mortar schools evaluated in the A-F Letter Grade Accountability System serve mainly FAY students, only 25% of students enrolled at an AOI qualified as FAY. Based on national research, as well as input from AOI operators statewide, students choose online instruction for a variety of reasons, including:

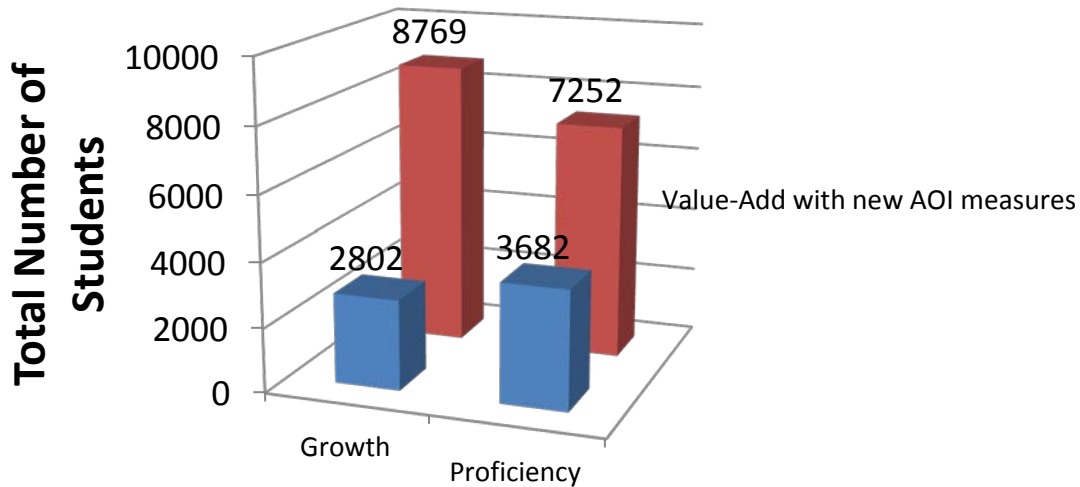
- Credit recovery (e.g., remedial mathematics, remedial English, etc.)
- Credit acceleration (e.g., early graduation, etc.)
- Meeting local-level graduation requirements
- Temporary or permanent preference for online instruction
- Other reasons such as health, environment, etc.

Unlike extremely small schools or schools with very few test records, most online schools provide instruction to students on an “as needed” basis and may have student achievement results which can be aggregated to produce an accountability determination. In prior years, this data produced letter grade determinations based on a small portion of the students who received instruction and/or were tested at the online school.

Since December of 2013, ADE conducted two dozen meetings on AOI accountability with external stakeholders in order to vet various methodologies which could fairly capture and reflect their unique data. ADE worked with schools who received A-F letter grades in prior years, as well as those who were not rated in prior years. In the end, AOI operators advocated for an accountability determination which addressed their concurrently enrolled students, high student mobility, and put an emphasis on growth. In order to ensure the accountability system was fairly applied to AOI

schools for the 2013-2014 school year, only measures available to all schools were included. Importantly, this new model reinforces Arizona’s position as a pioneer in not only school choice but also accountability systems specific to the unique educational options available to students. The model establishes comparability and accountability for K-12 online education and holds AOI schools to the same expectations for student achievement and growth as all other schools in Arizona, while addressing their unique attributes. Most importantly, the model for AOI schools includes students considered to be non-full academic year (FAY) within the accountability system; school accountability has typically excluded non-FAY students from all measures of student achievement (Figure 2A.ii).

**Figure 2A.ii Comparison AOI Students Included in Accountability Models**



On March 23, 2015, the SBE voted unanimously to adopt a letter grading proposed methodology specific to AOI schools. AOI letter grades denoted by a -DL (i.e. B-DL) will be assigned to the 2014 A-F letter grade accountability determinations. This important decision establishes Arizona as a pioneer in developing an array of accountability models to accommodate the multiple school configurations of school choice options, which correspond with a system of accountability unique to those schools. This decision also sets the precedent for any future state-developed system of accountability to reflect accountability specific to the growing number of AOI providers. Through collaboration with stakeholders, ardent research of defensible accountability systems, and focus on inclusion in a state-developed system of accountability, Arizona can proudly match its diverse school choice system with a diverse set of methods to hold schools accountable in a fair and comprehensive manner. All Arizona schools can be held accountable for their performance in the 2013-2014 school year.

The AOI model does not deviate from the letter grading methodology required by A.R.S §15-241; however, measures like SGP used in the accountability for all other Arizona schools are adjusted to accommodate the limitations previously discussed. (Although the 2014 A-F AOI model (described in Attachment 2I) was only used for letter grades for the 2013-2014 school year, the methodology unique to online schools will continue to be improved and unique to this particular model of



education delivery. The significant thought and development of this particular formula for online schools sets the precedent for any future accountability system developed for Arizona.

In April 2013, the Arizona State Board of Education added a college-and career-readiness index (CCRI) to the A-F Letter Grade accountability model for traditional high schools. The State Board-approved index introduces a multiple measure component to the Arizona accountability system that is not reliant solely on the state assessment. Assuming a weight of 25% overall in a high school's accountability determination, the full CCRI consists of a weight of 15% for graduation rate (i.e., 4- and 5- years, with additional points for a benchmark reached for 6-, and 7-year rates); 5% for participation in college- and career-readiness classes or examinations; and 5% for success in college- and career-readiness classes, examinations, and professional certification (see Table 2A.2). This index incentivizes schools to offer courses that will prepare students for success beyond high school. As ADE's data system matured over the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 school years, CCRI indicators will be clearly defined and will be applicable to all Arizona high schools.

**Table 2A.2 CCRI Components and Points**

Weight	Item and Points
10%	Annual 4-year grad rate
5%	Annual 5-year grad rate
	6-year grad rate and 7-year grad rate*
	<i>Cap of 30 points (15%) permitted for graduation rate</i>
5%	"On-track" to be College and/or Career Ready
5%	College and/or Career Ready Success

The State Board of Education adopted the more comprehensive CCRI graduation component because of its inclusion of all cohorts – particularly those six and seven year graduates. These delayed graduates tended to be disproportionately from economically disadvantaged and minority backgrounds and/or receiving special education services. Hispanic students comprised 46 and 48% of 5- and 6-year graduates respectively. Arizona boasts the country's largest Native American reservation; however, Native American students had the lowest 4-year graduation rate, though they were the highest subgroup to graduate within five years. Of all 7-year graduates, 59% were students participating in special education.

ADE continues to collaborate with stakeholders and develop data capacity to fully implement the CCRI Participation and Success indicators. At their May 2014 Board meeting, the SBE voted to include the CCRI graduation rate component of 15% in FY14, while preserving the existing point scale. This will address the condition on Arizona's Flexibility Request, as specified in the November 2013 letter, to be effective for the 2013-14 school year, understanding that the final adoption of policy is a duty constitutionally and statutorily vested with the State Board of Education. The State Board approved the use of a modified CCRI for alternative schools with low graduation rates, because of their intended purpose to serve over-aged, under-credited students. Therefore, the CCRI for alternative schools considers the "better-of" the 4, 5, 6, or 7 year cohort rate as well as the overall academic persistence rate for students in grades 6-12 for a total of 30 A-F points to parallel the implementation for traditional schools. Because an alternative school, by definition, will serve at least 70% of students who are academically behind or have struggled in the traditional school setting as evidenced by low achievement, the emphasis on academic persistence addresses the higher

likelihood for students who may dropout. Schools received credit for academic persistence, if eligible, students (non-graduates) who were enrolled with them in the prior fiscal year enrolled in any Arizona public school in that following year.

In the winter of 2015, ADE completed Phase 1 of a two phase project designed to make data related to college- and career-readiness accessible for schools and the public alike. For full transparency, ADE worked to provide external vendor assessment data to schools in a series of reports related to their students' postsecondary readiness and postsecondary outcomes. Providing the CCRI reports to schools brings Arizona one step closer to having a multiple measure accountability system. Even if these data are not included in a 2015 or 2016 letter grade, these new reports allow schools access to information for their own formative purposes. In order to make the CCRI universally accessible to all schools, ADE built the capacity to consume data from multiple vendors so as not to weight particular postsecondary assessments or preparation activities over others. Arizona's significant investment minimizes the amount of self-reported data needed for a multiple measure system, unlike other state accountability systems, which may consume multiple measures via self-report only. The following reports exemplify Arizona's on-going efforts to use longitudinal data for a state accountability system, which parallels the College and Career Ready Standards applicable to all students.

The first example, the Postsecondary Enrollment Report, summarizes the number of students who graduated from an individual school and enrolled in postsecondary education and/or training. To protect student privacy, this report is only provided at a summary level. After the student graduates from an Arizona high school, the National Student Clearinghouse provides the Department with enrollment information. ADE matches the SAIS ID number for each student to the high school which enters a valid end of year or exit code indicating graduation in the last fiscal year the student was enrolled. Students must pass enrollment integrity and have a graduation code in order to be included in the summary data. Below is a sample report for a small, alternative Arizona high school:

Postsecondary Enrollment Report			
<div> <div>Report Parameters</div> <div> <div>District:</div> <div>School:</div> <div>Cohort Year:</div> </div> </div> <div> <div>District:</div> <div>All Schools</div> <div>2014</div> </div>			
<div>Back to Report</div>			
	Type	2 - Year College	4 - Year College
<b>In State</b> (Click on the link above to see list of schools where students are enrolled)	Public	10	0
	Private	0	4
<b>Out of State</b> (Click on the link above to see the list of states where students are enrolled)	Public	0	0
	Private	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		10	5

Another example, the Postsecondary Assessment Report, contains summary and student-level data for non-statewide assessment results. Schools may review a variety of assessment results for students who have a valid enrollment at the school within the same fiscal year as the test date. The student's overall result will reflect their postsecondary readiness, when a College and Career Ready indicator

score is established by the test vendor. With the exception of CTE End of Program assessment data, students are matched to SAIS ID numbers based on name, date of birth, and grade level. The SAIS ID number is then matched to a valid fiscal year enrollment at an Arizona high school; schools may only view assessment results for students with a valid end of year code. Assessments reported in this sample include:

- ACT
- SAT
- PSAT
- Advanced Placement(AP)
- CTE End of Program Skills Assessment
- GED

## Postsecondary Assessment Summary Report

### Report Parameters

District:

School:

Fiscal Year:  
2014No. Of Students  
Tested:  
419No. of Students who  
Met CCR Target:  
175
[Back to Report](#)
Display  records per pageSearch: 

Print

Download

Test Type	No. of Students Tested	No. of Students Met College & Career Ready Target
AP Art History	7	2
AP Biology	21	2
AP Calculus AB	8	7
AP Calculus BC	1	1
AP Chemistry	24	8
AP Chinese Language and Culture	1	1
AP Computer Science A	11	6
AP English Language and Composition	27	7
AP English Literature and Composition	22	10
AP European History	4	3
AP Macroeconomics	12	8
AP Microeconomics	12	8
AP Psychology	19	14
AP Spanish Language	1	1
AP Statistics	12	8
AP United States Government and Politics	44	9
AP United States History	2	1
AP World History exam score	134	28
PSAT	48	43
SAT	9	8

Showing page 1 of 1

[Previous](#) [1](#) [Next](#)

**Report Parameters**

District:

School:

Fiscal Year:

2014

[Back to Report](#)Display  records per pageSearch: [Print](#)[Download](#)

SAIS ID	Entity	Cohort	Test Type	Course	Score
		2017	AP	United States Government and Politics	3
		2018	AP	Calculus AB	5
		2018	AP	Psychology	5
		2018	AP	World History exam score	4
		2018	AP	World History exam score	3
		2015	AP	Chemistry	2
		2015	AP	Computer Science A	4
		2015	AP	English Literature and Composition	4
		2015	AP	World History exam score	5
		2015	PSAT		207
		2017	AP	United States Government and Politics	2
		2017	AP	United States Government and Politics	3
		2015	AP	Chemistry	2
		2015	AP	English Literature and Composition	2
		2015	AP	Statistics	3
		2015	AP	World History exam score	2
		2015	PSAT		147
		2015	SAT		1620
		2016	PSAT		141
		2016	AP	English Literature and Composition	2
		2016	AP	World History exam score	2
		2016	PSAT		126
		2016	AP	Chemistry	3
		2016	AP	English Language and Composition	4
		2016	AP	Psychology	4
		2016	AP	World History exam score	3
		2016	PSAT		181
		2016	AP	Biology	2

ADE will only provide GED results for former students if the high school indicates the student's withdrawal reason was to pursue a GED. High schools do not receive GED results for students who exit the school for any other reason.

College and Career Ready Course Completion reports reflect data reported by the school/LEA through Student Teacher Course Connection (STC). This data relies on accurate and consistent reporting by the school. The data within this report may be used by ADE for accountability purposes to ensure students have access to rigorous course work, dual enrollment opportunities, and other vocational training while enrolled in high school. These data are available at the summary and student-level. This report will reflect changes to enrollment information entered into STC. For accountability purposes, only students who have completed the course as indicated by an End-of-Course grade entry as well as an indication of number of credits earned may be included. Schools with concurrently enrolled high school students will only be able to review their own submissions to STC – student course detail information will only be provided to the school where the course is completed.

ADE will add additional data sources as they become available including Indicator 14 Postsecondary Outcomes Survey for all high school students who exit with an IEP; this data collection, required by 34 CFR 300.601, 300.602 and 300.640 and Title I B section 618, provides the ability to ensure

students with disabilities are represented within the determination of high school students who exit College and Career Ready. International Baccalaureate and Cambridge assessments used in the awarding of Arizona’s Grand Canyon Diploma for academically advanced students will also be included. In an effort to ensure access and ability to collaborate, schools have the ability to utilize this data and consider different elements, which should be included in a comprehensive College and Career Ready school accountability system. This increased data transparency and availability provides the opportunity to report more college and career ready data in annual school report cards.

Arizona’s investment will minimize the amount of self-reported data needed for a multiple measure system by developing the capacity to consume data from multiple vendors and provide longitudinal data to schools – some of which have never had access to this level of student outcomes reporting. Schools no longer have to dedicate their limited resources to individually contracting with vendors for data which requires some level of data management and sophistication not available to all schools. The development of a CCRI graduation index and reports proves Arizona’s commitment to implementation of a state accountability system oriented to measuring students’ College-and Career-Readiness. This effort also illustrates Arizona’s commitment to using actionable data relevant to schools in school and district accountability. Preservation of the CCRI and maintaining the momentum of effort and collaboration gained thus far remains a strategic goal throughout the transition of our assessment and accountability system.

### ***Transition of Arizona’s A-F Letter Grade Accountability System***

The efforts outlined above demonstrate ADE’s commitment to “ensure that all schools are held accountable and receive necessary support under a parallel and/or supplemental system” as described in its conditional ESEA Flexibility approval for the 2014-2015 school year. The growth and refinements of Arizona’s accountability system in the last few years has resulted in increased accountability for all schools and all students more so than AYP or the AZLEARNS system each accomplished alone. However, stakeholder feedback given at several State Board of Education and subcommittee meetings warranted pursuing legislative relief from the current letter grading formula, while Arizona teachers and students acclimate to a new assessment to test relatively new standards using a new mode of administration.

[SB 1289](#) establishes a transition process and prohibits ADE and the SBE from assigning schools and LEAs letter grade classifications during the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years (transition period) as prescribed in A.R.S §15-241. This bill also requires the SBE and ADE to submit a report to the Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate proposing legislation to implement the revised accountability system for schools and LEAs by December 15, 2015. The impact of a new assessment, the desire to include multiple measures, and the need for a rigorous letter grading scale justifies a meaningful and thorough review of the state’s A-F system during this transition period.

Arizona has no intention of discounting low achievement during this transition period. The interim method to monitor student achievement and school progress preserves underlying components of the original A-F System. Disaggregated reports of student achievement and other indicators of school quality for all schools in the state, regardless of population or zip code, can increase transparency and expose areas ripe for improvement otherwise obscured by the compensatory model of the A-F System. Due to the need to focus on the academic achievement and academic outcomes of Arizona students versus the market driven education system fueled by school letter

grades, in this transition period Arizona will utilize the existing components of its letter grade system and assign consequences based on performance on those components.

**Figure 2A.iii Three Scenarios - “A” Letter Grade Schools**

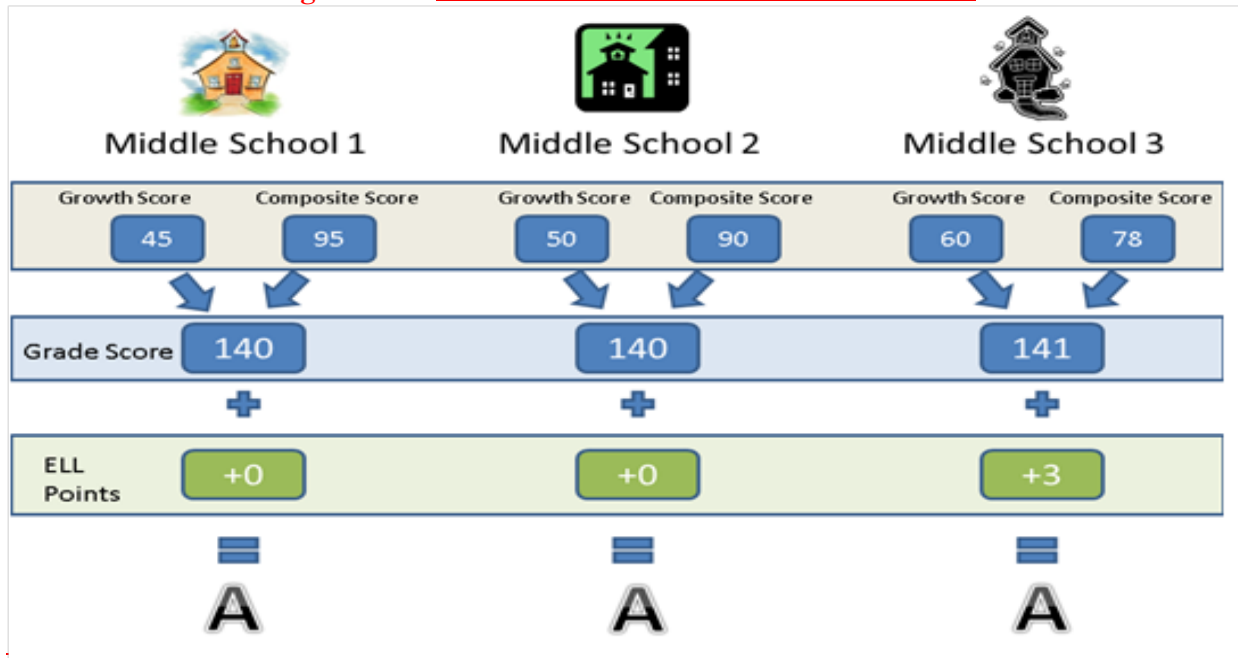
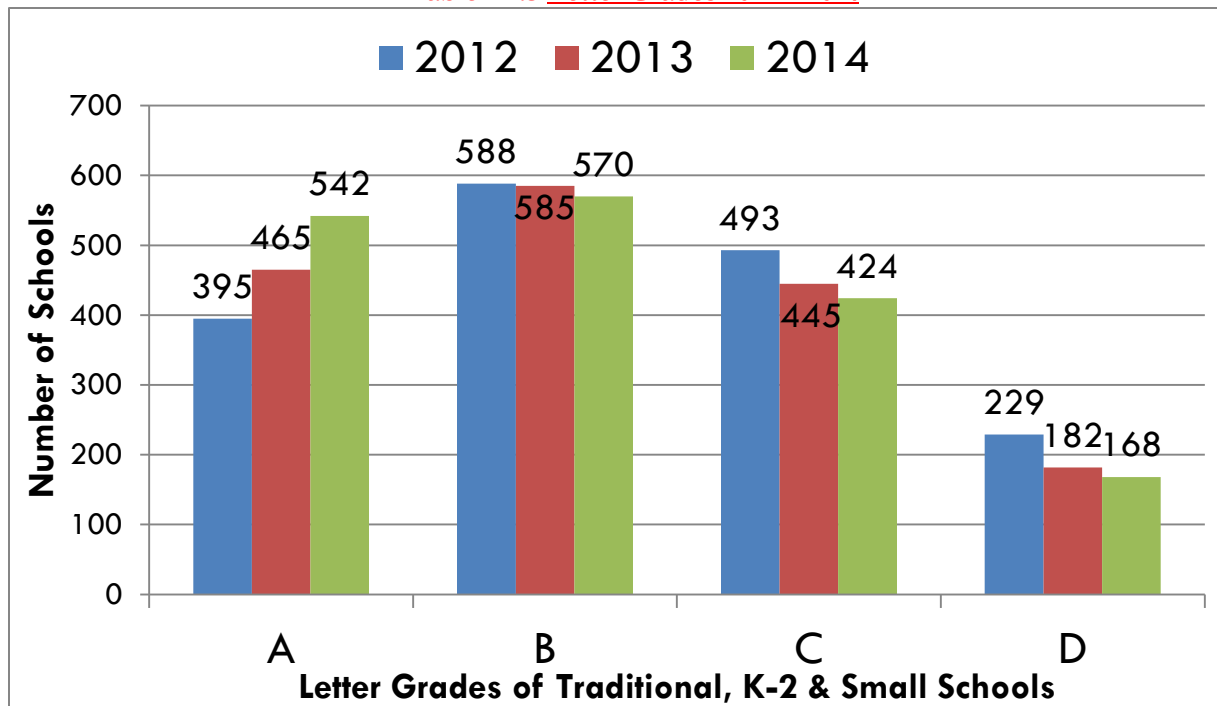


Figure 2A.iii illustrates how three different schools could earn an “A”; however, this single letter grade may not adequately identify shortcomings in specific areas – nor does a significantly lower letter grade convey strengths within a school. A hiatus from aggregating several components into a single letter grade will expose unintended consequences of current state statutory requirements or limitations related to assigning letter grades in the manner prescribed. Since 2012, the number of Arizona schools earning an “A” letter grade has increased; however, measures underlying the letter grading system such as proficiency and growth have not grown in parallel. The Table 2A.3 below shows the distribution of letter grade over the past three years.

**Table 2A.3 Letter Grades 2012 – 2014**

Many Arizona families taking advantage of the school choice system trust these labels to reliably inform their enrollment decisions, so it is especially important that performance on these measures represent the overall letter grade. With the first administration of a new assessment, it is important to disentangle artificial inflation from genuine gains being made by individual schools.

Similarly, it is also important to ensure the first administration of a new assessment does not produce unintended punitive consequences for schools. A closer analysis of the data underlying letter grades will identify regression due to measurement versus academic decline within a school. Unavoidable consequences of a brand new assessment measuring higher academic standards justify prudent analyses of how school accountability determinations will be impacted by a new assessment.

While all students can achieve and all schools can excel, unintended consequences of a highly compensatory model gives a school the ability to earn the highest letter grade possible despite a 64% four-year graduation rate – well below the state and national average. Furthermore, an above average school labeled a “B” may graduate only half of its students within four years and show average student growth scores (see Table 2A.4).



**Table 2A.4 Graduation Rates Within Arizona's A-F Letter Grade Accountability System**

By Letter Grade; 15% as approved by SBE		4-year Grad rate	5-year Grad rate	6-year Grad rate	7-year Grad rate	Percent passing	Growth points
A	Mean	91.66	93.26	93.48	92.14	81.91	60.55
	Median	92.74	95.34	95.62	94.67	82.00	60.00
	N	96	96	96	96	96	96
	Std. Deviation	6.533	6.909	6.749	7.940	9.750	7.804
	Std. Error of Mean	.667	.705	.689	.810	.995	.796
	Maximum	100	100	100	100	100	85
	Minimum	64	50	68	62	56	43
	Skewness	-1.624	-3.204	-2.039	-1.727	-.245	.426
	% of Total Sum	37.4%	36.9%	36.5%	36.4%	40.5%	39.2%
B	Mean	83.86	85.53	86.16	84.83	67.97	50.69
	Median	85.37	88.57	88.58	88.74	68.00	50.50
	N	104	104	104	104	104	104
	Std. Deviation	9.324	14.209	10.942	12.940	7.690	5.657
	Std. Error of Mean	.914	1.393	1.073	1.269	.754	.555
	Maximum	100	100	100	100	88	73
	Minimum	50	14	38	32	48	39
	Skewness	-1.264	-3.205	-2.324	-2.176	-.091	.862
	% of Total Sum	37.1%	36.7%	36.4%	36.3%	36.4%	35.6%
C	Mean	71.89	78.04	80.23	79.79	55.89	44.63
	Median	75.50	80.35	84.15	82.76	54.50	45.00
	N	64	64	64	64	64	64
	Std. Deviation	14.988	14.083	14.846	12.508	7.870	6.318
	Std. Error of Mean	1.874	1.760	1.856	1.563	.984	.790
	Maximum	95	100	100	100	73	62
	Minimum	17	28	8	42	31	31
	Skewness	-1.699	-1.631	-2.473	-1.010	-.059	.057
	% of Total Sum	19.6%	20.6%	20.9%	21.0%	18.4%	19.3%
D	Mean	58.81	59.21	63.83	63.73	37.00	36.25
	Median	62.50	65.21	70.62	72.08	39.00	37.50
	N	24	24	24	24	24	24
	Std. Deviation	19.392	23.660	22.136	25.180	13.221	6.771
	Std. Error of Mean	3.958	4.830	4.518	5.140	2.699	1.382
	Maximum	87	100	89	100	66	51
	Minimum	4	7	4	11	10	22
	Skewness	-1.104	-.471	-1.208	-.657	-.079	-.165
	% of Total Sum	6.0%	5.9%	6.2%	6.3%	4.6%	5.9%
Total	Mean	81.71	84.25	85.42	84.39	67.35	51.43
	Median	85.66	89.07	88.76	88.89	68.00	51.00
	N	288	288	288	288	288	288
	Std. Deviation	14.998	16.293	14.582	15.055	16.050	10.085
	Std. Error of Mean	.884	.960	.859	.887	.946	.594
	Maximum	100	100	100	100	100	85
	Minimum	4	7	4	11	10	22
	% of Total Sum	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 2A.5 shows the range of points for each A-F Letter Grade level, and a description of each A-F Letter Grade as described in A.R.S §15-241. Under state statute, a letter grade of ‘F’ is designated if a school or district receives a letter grade of ‘D’ for three consecutive years. [HB 2663](#) (underperforming school districts: reclassification), requested by the State Board of Education and signed by former Governor Brewer, enabled the State Board of Education to expedite the process of determining that a “D” school should become an “F” school, if the Board determines that the school is not reasonably likely to achieve an average level of performance.

**Table 2A.5 A-F Letter Grade Total Scores and Description**

Rating	Total Score	Description
A	140-200	LEA/school demonstrates an <b>excellent</b> level of performance
B	120-139	LEA/school demonstrates an <b>above average</b> level of performance
C	100-119	LEA/school demonstrates an <b>average</b> level of performance
D	0-99	LEA/school demonstrates a <b>below average</b> level of performance
F		Those schools earning a “D” for three consecutive years

The letter grade scale and thresholds used to determine a school’s final letter grade were derived through a rigorous, iterative process in collaboration with ADE’s Technical Advisory Committee and guidance from the State Board of Education’s AZ-LEARNs subcommittee. The adoption of the A-F Letter Grade scale was done by the State Board of Education. This scale was set more than five years ago and the number of points required in order to receive a particular letter grade has not changed since the beginning of Arizona’s A-F System – with the exception of Arizona’s A-F point scale for alternative schools. While the descriptive meaning of each letter grade remained constant, opportunities for schools to earn points toward a letter grade expanded over the years. To demonstrate, Arizona increased graduation rate accountability for the A-F Letter Grades of high schools, pursuant to conditions under the 2013 ESEA Waiver. Unlike other A-F states like Florida, which is statutorily required to monitor the robustness of their letter grading scale on a regular basis, there is no such provision in A.R.S §15-241, which mandates a rescale of Arizona’s A-F point system whenever a significant shift occurs. Unfortunately, overall proficiency rates in Arizona high schools have not increased over the last three years despite the increased accountability for on-time graduation in the 2013-2014 school year – a measure Arizona believes to be essential in the accountability of high schools, as demonstrated in Table 2A.6.

**Table 2A.6 Average High School Proficiency Rates by Letter Grade**

Letter Grades	Average High School Proficiency Rates		
	2012	2013	2014
<b>A</b>	86	86	83
<b>B</b>	73	73	69
<b>C</b>	62	60	57
<b>D</b>	45	45	39

Table 2A.7 demonstrates how annual changes in the A-F System are not reflected in primary components, which determine a school's letter grade. Through the multiple opportunities to gain points attributed to a fixed scale using fixed criteria, Arizona schools' performance on the scale grew while student outcomes failed to grow in parallel. Table 2A.7 was presented to the State Board of Education in August 2014 to demonstrate how an overall A-F label can mask performance decreases, increases, and stagnancy in key areas when the number of points drives school accountability. High schools earned five additional points on average when accountability of graduation rate was increased to 15% within the A-F model; furthermore, over 90% of high schools under the traditional A-F model received an additional 3 “bonus” points based on meeting dropout rate criteria, which had not been re-scaled based on markedly lower dropout rates throughout the state.

**Table 2A.7 2013 to 2014 Average Change on A-F Model Components by School Type**

	<b>Percent Passing</b>	<b>Median Student Growth</b>	<b>Growth Points</b>	<b>Total Points</b>
Alternative Schools	+1% point	+2	+2	+8
Traditional Non-High Schools	No Change	No Change	No Change	+2
Traditional High Schools	No Change	+1	No Change	+5
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>No Change</b>	<b>No Change</b>	<b>No Change</b>	<b>+3</b>

While letter grade inflation is a significant concern, the opposite end of the A-F spectrum concerns high-stakes, low letter grades, which can discount a school's academic growth and exacerbate factors like poverty which impact student achievement. A low letter grade may steer a family away from enrolling their student in a school; however, a low letter grade also triggers consequences intended to improve the school in any areas of deficiency, even if those areas are predicated on socioeconomic conditions surrounding the school. Researchers at an Arizona-based non-profit specializing in Arizona charter schools found that Arizona's A-F model failed to adequately control for the effect of poverty on indicators of achievement in order to measure the school's contribution to learning, therefore limiting its utility as an indicator of school quality (Attachment 2C. Aportela and Laczko-Kerr 2013).

All LEAs and schools, both district and charter, are held accountable under the A-F System but charter schools are held accountable to additional requirements laid out in an Academic Performance Framework adopted by the ASBCS. The Academic Performance Framework examines Operational, Financial, and Academic Performance. Although it utilizes student achievement and growth data processed by ADE, the ASBCS Framework holds charter schools accountable in a much more demanding and nuanced manner. When the A-F Letter Grade system was compared to ASBCS's Academic Performance Framework, the results revealed that charter schools' data were applied to an additional, more rigorous set of business rules which produced less inflated labels compared to the A-F system. For example, under the A-F System 170 charter schools received an “A” or “A-ALT” but only 28 of those schools received an “Exceeds Standard” rating from the ASBCS. Similarly, 133 charter schools received a “B” or “B-ALT” which is defined as “above average” by statute, but 36 of those received a “Does Not Meet Standard” label from the ASBCS.

Alignment between the two systems occurs mainly at the lowest performance band – “Falls Far Below Standard” and the “D” or “D-ALT” grade – all charter schools that received a “D” from the A-F Letter Grade system (49) received either a “Does Not Meet Standard” (31) or “Falls Far Below Standard” (18) rating from the ASBCS. (Table 2A.8.) These inconsistent labels and conflicting information reported to the public regarding a school’s performance disregards the intent of the A-F system as Arizona’s primary method of holding schools accountable in a single, coherent manner.

**Table 2A.8 Comparison - 2014 A-F Letter Grades and ASBCS Academic Performance Framework**

		Falls Far Below Standard	Does Not Meet Standard	Meets Standard	Exceeds Standard	Total
A-F Letter Grade	A	0	0	135	27	162
	A-ALT	0	0	7	1	8
	B	0	33	68	1	102
	B-ALT	0	3	27	1	31
	C	1	68	7	0	76
	C-ALT	0	26	23	0	49
	D	15	17	0	0	32
	D-ALT	3	14	0	0	17
Total		19	161	267	30	477*

\*Excludes schools with 2014 Pending labels as of January 2015.

Acknowledging high achieving schools and identifying the lowest performing schools remains a shared goal for the ASBCS and ADE. To date, all schools assigned “F” letter grades have done so due to three year of performing “below average” rather than intervention by the State Board of Education – which is statutorily permitted under A.R.S §15-241. After the third full year of implementation, the number of schools labeled “F” after a third “D” more than tripled, based on 2013-2014 assessment data. The point band for a “D” letter grade spans 99 points; almost two dozen schools received “F” grades, despite implementing interventions for three years, which resulted in academic gains as evidenced by gains up to 33 points.

**Table 2A.9a 3 year Change of A-F Points for FY 2014 “F” Schools**

School Improvement Implementation	Number of School Year 2013-2014 “F” Schools	Average Difference of FY2014 Points and FY2012 Points
NO	25	-1.08
YES	40	4.7
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>2.393939394</b>

The A-F school letter grades of Arizona charter schools initiates an intensive evaluation process which may lead to extreme high stakes consequences. The Academic Performance Framework (ASBCS label) aligns with the A-F letter grade accountability system in the identification of extremely underperforming schools, as evidenced by testimony made to the ASBCS in January 2015;

the disposition of the schools of the 17 charter holders sponsored by the Board and one sponsored by the SBE that received a letter grade of F in FY14 due to earning 3 consecutive D's was:

- 6 schools' performance was reviewed by the ASBCS with only 3 schools providing evidence of systemic improvement;
- 3 charters were not renewed when their applications were considered last summer;
- 2 charters were required to close the sites that received an F, as part of the Board's approval for renewal of their charter contract, allowing them to continue operating their other schools;
- 4 chose to surrender their charter and close schools during the review process,
- 2 also earned F letter grades in FY13, 1 of those is appealing revocation and the other surrendered their charter;
- 1 withdrew its renewal application and the original charter expired at the end of FY14, and
- 1 SBE-authorized charter failed to submit a transfer application to ASBCS and their contract expires on June 8, 2015.

An intensive, lengthy confirmation of these schools' poor performance was initiated after three years of a "D" letter grade in order to determine the school's ability to continue operating. An overhaul of A.R.S. §15-241 after the transition period may decrease the number of years students remain in very low achieving schools, so they suffer from minimal academic regression. Still, the ability to evaluate schools on disaggregated data will help inform the criteria used to define a "failing" school in Arizona without putting so many students at risk of struggling academically for multiple years. Roughly 46,000 students were enrolled in schools with a failing label in the 2013-2014 school year; the current system used to identify a failing school has the potential to stifle a student's academic progress for up to three years before the school receives a failing label. The need to address these, among other issues, has been widely documented throughout the state (Attachment 2D- Robb 2014).

Given the information above, Arizona plans to use the summer and fall of 2015 to develop proposed legislation to address the unintended consequences which threaten both the validity and reliability of the A-F labels assigned to schools. During this same period of time, standard setting will occur on the inaugural administration of Arizona's new statewide assessment to measure students' growth toward college- and career-readiness. Due to the standard setting process, as well as the policy decisions required to identify and adopt achievement levels on the new assessment, schools and parents expect a delay in student achievement results for this year with scoring returning to a normal cycle in the subsequent year. [SB 1289](#) and the transition plan gives Arizona schools the same thoughtful consideration afforded to students in the standard setting and policy adoption process. The State Board of Education's pursuit of a two-year transition of the state accountability system was widely supported by stakeholders (Attachment 2E. State Board Minutes December 2014).

Arizona believes its system of holding schools accountable must match the robustness and significance of its school choice system. The magnitude of the shift in standards and assessment justifies a disaggregation of data in order to identify low performing schools regardless of Title I status. While Arizona transitions both its assessment and accountability systems, the state can also

focus on ensuring academic quality for all students, regardless of subgroup membership, socioeconomic status, or other educational needs.

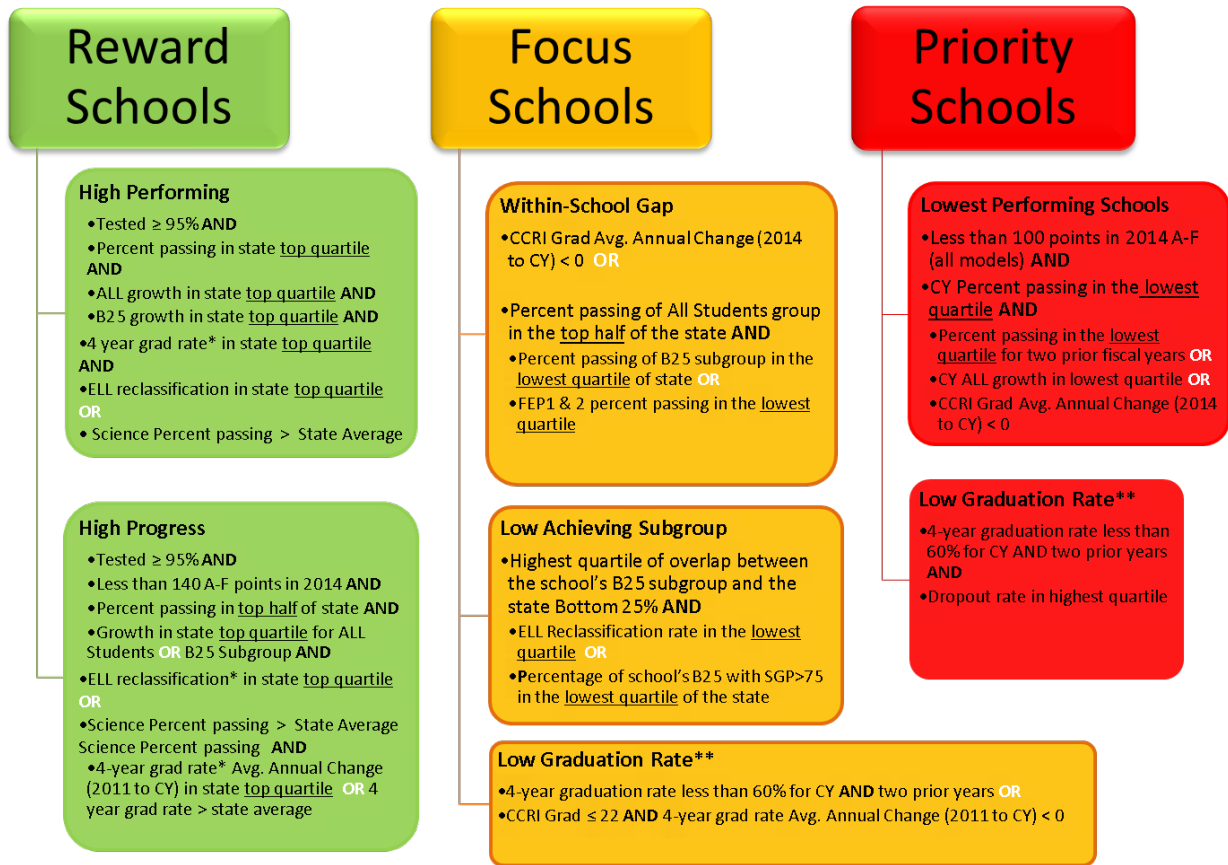
After three full years of implementation of the A-F letter grade accountability system, Arizona schools and stakeholders have identified several areas to improve within the state's accountability system. Still, Arizona schools, parents, and policy makers have realized tangible benefits and favorable outcomes under ESEA Flexibility. The state believes we can continue to meet these goals when flexibility is granted by the U.S. Department of Education to apply the Reward, Focus, and Priority criteria statewide to both Title I and non-Title I schools. Components contained within Arizona's A-F Letter Grade Accountability System will continue in the interim application of the Reward, Focus, Priority criteria statewide. The state's ultimate goal for continued flexibility is to carefully merge to one seamless accountability system that measures all schools' ability to prepare students for college- and career-readiness. With Arizona's state-developed accountability system as the foundation, the state can enhance the identification and recognition system and further differentiate appropriate interventions without aggregation to a letter grade and with concentration on key areas. Taken together, these changes will allow Arizona to target support where students may be struggling and create a system focused on college- and career-readiness that supports continuous improvement and early interventions.

As indicated before, the legislature amended statute to prohibit ADE assigning letter grades to schools during the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years; therefore, the state will monitor school performance by using criteria to identify the lowest performing schools and distinguished reward schools statewide. In the absence of an A-F Letter Grade or A-F Letter Grade points, ADE will amend the current criteria in order to use the underlying accountability measures to identify qualifying Reward, Focus, and Priority schools. This transition period allows ADE to work with stakeholders to gain input and analyze the criteria for developing a more robust A-F system once the transition period ends.

### *Accountability in the Absence of A-F Letter Grades*

To continue the state-developed accountability system, ADE devised methodology to differentiate, identify, and support schools statewide during the transition to new assessments without the issuance of an A-F letter grade. In order to demonstrate a commitment to holding all schools accountable for the performance of all students, Arizona will continue to track and report school progress in order to *Reward* schools with high progress or performance, *Focus* on schools where subgroups demonstrate need, and ensure the lowest performing schools are a top *Priority* for receiving support.

Without aggregating to a final, value-laden, letter grade, ADE developed a differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system for schools, which accounts for the transition to a new assessment and identifies schools with "below average" performance based on several measures. Without issuing a letter grade during the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years, ADE will continue to track and report school progress as described. Even in the absence of the A-F letter grade labels, the proposed Reward, Focus, and Priority criteria includes a far greater number of students than the alternative measure of Adequately Yearly Progress (AYP). Recognizing the importance of a state system, the revised Reward, Focus, Priority labels will be applied statewide.

**Figure 2A.iv Identifying Criteria for Reward, Focus and Priority During Transition**

Arizona believes the primary tenets of the system to identify schools for Reward, Focus, and Priority status are crucial for protecting the equitable access and progressive outcomes of students, regardless of all possible socioeconomic disadvantages or exceptional needs. As such, Arizona will preserve the intent of the A-F Letter Grade System by applying many of the core measures to the criteria used to identify Reward, Focus, and Priority schools (see Attachment 2J updated). All Arizona schools, regardless of Title I status, will be evaluated using the described criteria and receive corresponding labels in order to identify schools in need of support as well as schools which truly deserve recognition for high performance on all measures or high progress in key areas. This is consistent with the historical application of the AYP determination for non-Title I schools. Also consistent with previous practice, schools which do not meet the AMO in the current year would not be eligible for any Reward distinction as a safeguard from recognizing schools with persistent and/or growing achievement gaps. The new criteria will also integrate additional measures currently absent from the A-F system.



**Table 2A.9b Arizona's Accountability Transition**

<b><u>Arizona's Accountability Transition Years: Reward, Focus, &amp; Priority</u></b>								
<b><u>School Year</u></b>	<b><u>August</u></b>	<b><u>October-November</u></b>	<b><u>December</u></b>	<b><u>January</u></b>	<b><u>February</u></b>	<b><u>March</u></b>	<b><u>June</u></b>	<b><u>July</u></b>
<b><u>2014-2015</u></b>	<b><u>Year 1 of new Assessment aligned to Arizona standards</u></b>							
					<b><u>Suspend A-F for FY15 and FY16 based on SB1289; Develop criteria for Reward, Focus, &amp; Priority</u></b>	<b><u>SBE adopts new Priority criteria to identify "below average" schools for FY15 and FY16 as required by SB1289</u></b>	<b><u>Request ESEA Waiver with updated criteria, current priority &amp; focus schools</u></b>	<b><u>Begin reporting available 2014-2015 data ASAP</u></b>
<b><u>2015-2016</u></b>	<b><u>Development of Arizona's new state accountability system</u></b>							
		<b><u>2014-2015 student achievement data available, reported</u></b>	<b><u>Submit revised accountability legislation</u></b>	<b><u>Submit AMOs</u></b>	<b><u>Use new criteria to exit Cohort 1 Focus &amp; Priority schools based on 14-15 data.</u></b>		<b><u>Use new criteria to identify qualifying Reward, Focus, &amp; Priority schools using FY14 (Priority), FY15, and FY16 data.</u></b>	<b><u>PILOT new state accountability system based on 2015-2016 data (informational purposes)</u></b>
<b><u>2016-2017</u></b>	<b><u>First year of Implementation of Arizona's Revised State Accountability System</u></b>							
	<b><u>Begin Year 1 of implementation for newly identified Focus &amp; Priority schools</u></b>	-	-			-	<b><u>Use new criteria to identify and/or exit qualifying schools using FY14 (Priority A-F points) thru FY17 data.</u></b>	<b><u>Issue 2017 Accountability determinations based on 2016-2017 data; Request to realign ESEA criteria with new state system.</u></b>

In 2014, Arizona policymakers added performance on the statewide Science assessment as a component of A-F Letter Grades. Pursuant to A.R.S §15-241 G., Arizona must integrate assessment results from the 2014-2015 AIMS and AIMS A Science administration into state accountability. Previously, the A-F System only incorporated Mathematics and Reading assessment results. These two subjects showed small gains annually during the operationalization of A-F accountability; despite the absence of an assigned A-F letter grade for schools, Arizona will fulfill the intent of the legislation by incorporating Science performance into the criteria for recognition as a Reward school.

In 2014, all tested grades (8, 9 and 10) experienced decreased pass rates for AIMS Science, while Grade 4 was the only grade to increase from 2013. Grade 10 continues to show a downward trend line since 2010 of 39% passing AIMS Science in 2014. This is the second year Grade 9 students were permitted to take the AIMS Science assessment, so when comparing their percent passing to last year's results, they showed a slight decrease in percent passing (61%) than the previous year.

With the ultimate goal of weighing Science achievement at an equal significance as Mathematics and Reading; the initial incorporation of Science assessment results in the state accountability system will recognize relatively high student achievement in this content area as part of the criteria to be among the top performing schools in the state. Approximately one-third of Arizona schools achieved accountability determinations describing their overall performance as “Excellent” without consideration of achievement on AIMS and AIMS A Science. Arizona’s interim method will consider student achievement on Science in order to retain a label suggesting exceptional performance.

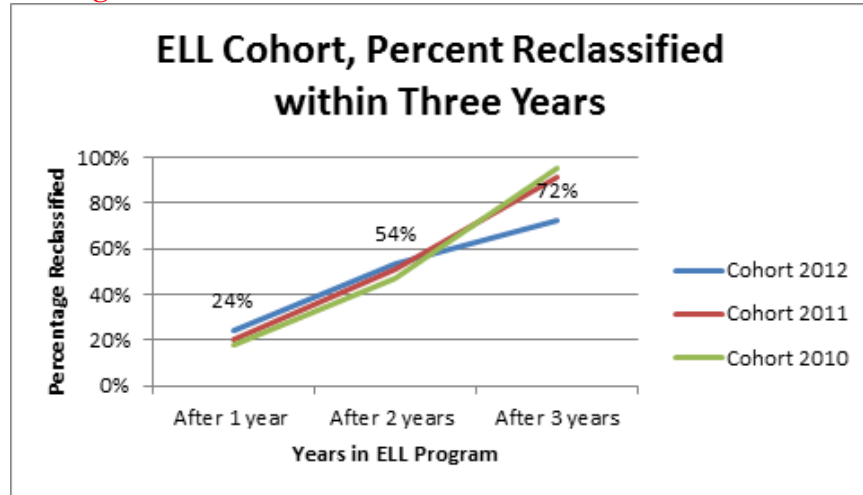
The criteria for Reward schools include schools receiving over 140 points in 2014 – or letter graded “A” – cannot be eligible for “high progress status.” Schools may demonstrate high progress over the 2013-2014 school year through high academic achievement as well as high student growth for either the Bottom 25% subgroup or all students. This produces possible overlap for focus and high progress status; however, it is the intention to target support to schools in most need where little to no evidence of upward trajectory exists. Schools showing high progress may have areas identified for improvement; regardless, a school that exhibits high growth for their Bottom 25% subgroup won’t be identified as a Focus school. Focus criteria will be run annually; high growth of a school’s lowest achieving students indicates progress to correct any gaps in student achievement.

In addition to student achievement in Science, the interim method developed to hold schools accountable for the achievement of subgroups will utilize the success of Arizona’s large population of reclassified ELL students, or Fluent English Proficient (FEP) students. English language acquisition, as measured by Arizona’s English proficiency assessment, AZELLA, can contribute up to 1.5% to a school’s overall letter grade. During ADE’s outreach to practitioners of English Language services to evaluate areas of improvement for services to and accountability of LEAs, the continued and improved inclusion of AZELLA results, in addition to other academic outcomes of this subgroup, were emphasized. Therefore, the interim accountability method will maintain a focus on English language acquisition and increase accountability for academic achievement of students deemed to be Fluent English Proficient (FEP).

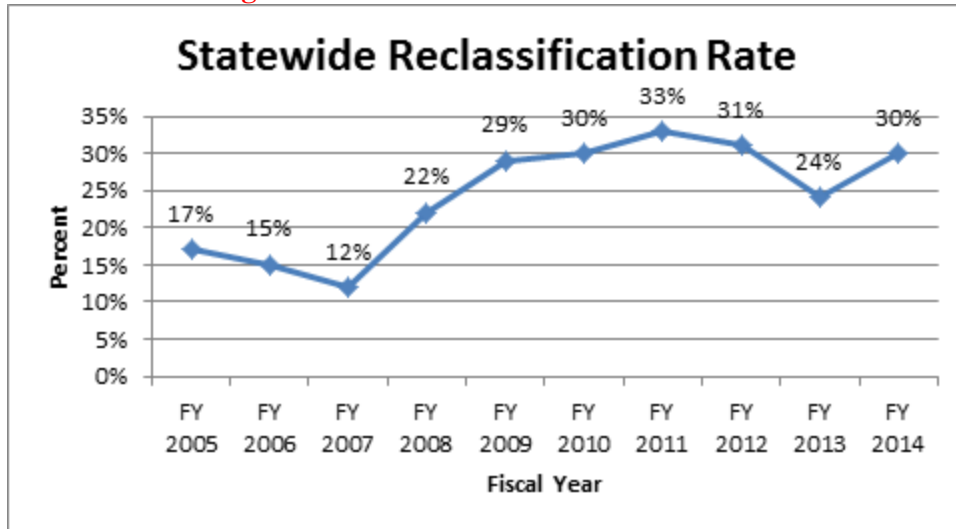
Arizona has an obligation to monitor FEP students for a minimum of two years following their exit from an ELL program (reclassification). This obligation is clearly defined in Federal law and Arizona Administrative Code R7-2-306 (I)(1). Arizona’s Structured English Immersion (SEI) Models are designed to ensure rapid English language acquisition. Therefore, it is imperative to monitor students after reclassification to ensure students are receiving any necessary supports or intervention services to be successful in the mainstream classroom. FEP students are monitored on their academic performance, as well as the statewide assessment. Unlike the A-F system, the interim accountability method will account for their continued progress and incentivize the upward mobility of ELL and former ELL students. Additionally, it recognizes an important part of a school’s ability to serve all students and ensure ELL and FEP students are acquiring English and succeeding in grade level classes.

In FY 2013, achievement on AZELLA became more rigorous, requiring students to score proficient in Reading, Writing, and the Total Combined scores. If all three expectations are met, a student will be classified with an Overall Proficiency Level of “Proficient.” Despite these changes, 72% of students who were first year ELL in FY 2012 (ELL Cohort 2012) reclassified within three years. Having a majority of ELL students reclassify within three years is a trend for Arizona with 91% of ELL Cohort 2011 and 95% of ELL Cohort 2010 reclassifying within three years.

**Figure 2A.v ELL Cohort Percent Reclassified Within 3 Years**



**Figure 2A.vi Statewide Reclassification Rate**



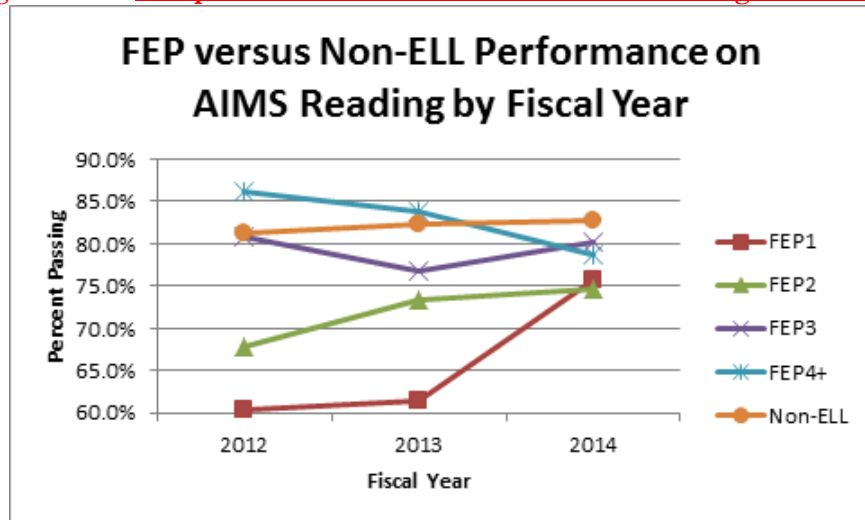
Notes: AZELLA 1 began in FY 2007, AZELLA 2 began in FY 2009, AZELLA 3 began in FY 2013

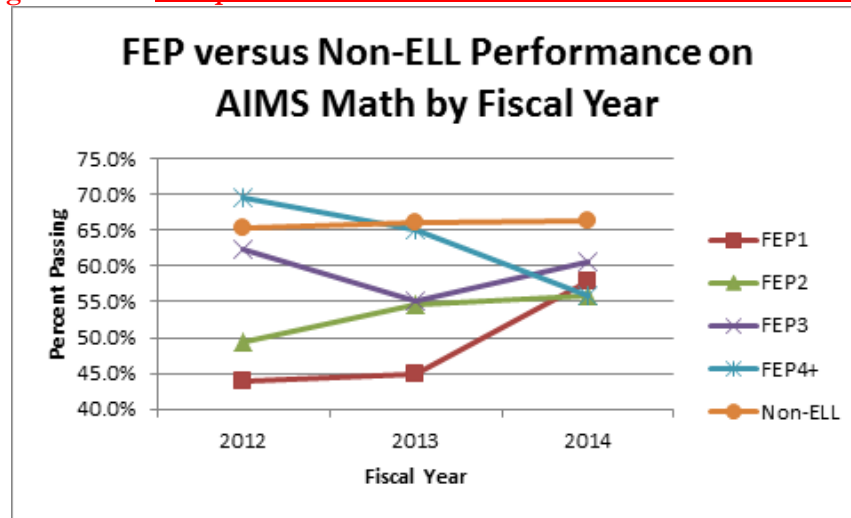
Arizona’s Structured English Immersions Models improved the reclassification rates of ELL students when comparing rates of exit from years prior to the implementation of the Models, 72% of all English language learners receive services in a Structured English Immersion (SEI) classroom, where the teacher provides instruction using the English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards. The areas of reading, writing, listening, speaking, vocabulary, and grammar are the foci of this instruction. The remaining 27% receive services through an Individualized Language Learner

Plan (ILLP). The plan specifies the ELP standards the teacher will then use for differentiation during the lessons in the mainstream classroom.

Additionally, FEP students outperform their native speaking peers on state academic assessments. Specifically, in FY 2014 all FEP students (FEP 1 – first year after reclassification; FEP 2 – second year after reclassification; FEP 3 – third year after reclassification; FEP 4+ - four or more years after reclassification) students matched or exceeded the rate of passing AIMS Reading in grades 3, 4 and 5. In grades 6 and 7, FEP 3 and FEP 4+ students held constant or outperformed non-ELLs. In grades 8 and HS FEP students do not perform as well, often because the content becomes far more complex. Identical trends are found for AIMS Mathematics with FEP students by grade. These trends are consistent over time; however, compared to prior years in FY 2014 a large increase in FEP 1 student performance on AIMS Reading and Mathematics occurred due to the new exit criteria. See figures below for details of aggregated statewide FEP performance compared to non-ELL performance on AIMS.

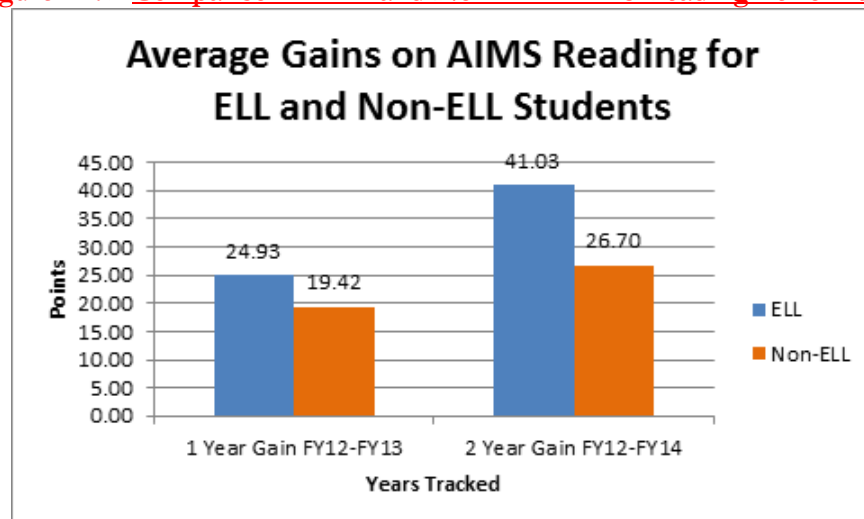
**Figure 2A.vii Comparison – FEP and Non-ELL AIMS Reading Performance**

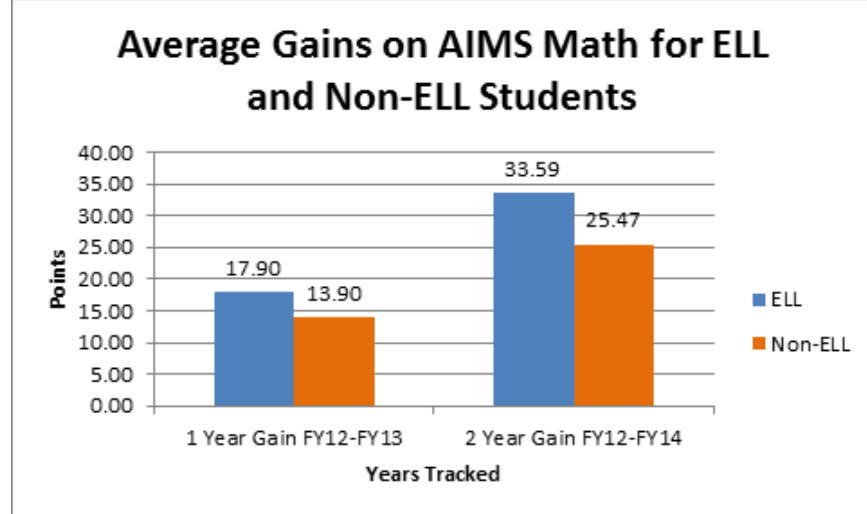


**Figure 2A.viii Comparison – FEP and Non-ELL AIMS Math Performance**

Arizona must continue to ensure these FEP students (roughly 98,000 in FY 2014) continue to grow academically alongside their peers. The observed decline in this past year on Arizona's statewide assessment by FEP 4+ students in addition to the FEP 1, FEP 2, and FEP 3 students overall in the state performing below the non-ELL students warrants the inclusion of FEP performance in order to identify and close achievement gaps.

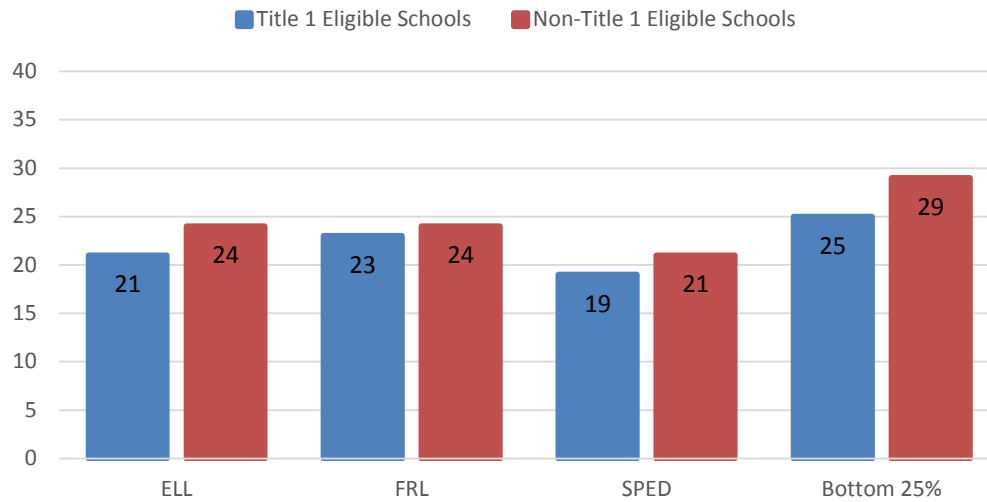
Moreover, when comparing ELL student growth on the statewide assessment to non-ELL student growth, ELL students showed the highest average scale score gains from FY 2012 to FY 2013 and FY 2012 to FY 2014 in both AIMS Reading and AIMS Mathematics compared to non-ELL students.

**Figure 2A.ix Comparison – ELL and Non-ELL AIMS Reading Performance**

**Figure 2A.x Comparison – ELL and Non-ELL AIMS Math Performance**

While ELL students continue to show immense improvement on the statewide assessment, their scores remain well below non-ELLs. Schools with exaggerated gaps in ELL and FEP student achievement yet rated highly overall suggest that the exceptional education program may not benefit all students to the fullest extent possible.

The primary method for incorporating subgroup performance in Arizona’s A-F letter grade accountability system had been demonstration of student growth scores. Operationalization of SGP in the A-F formula utilized a method which exacerbated residuals to the mean in efforts to identify “typical” student growth at the school level for all students as well as overweighting of the Bottom 25% subgroup. Independent research of Arizona’s SGP model explored other methods for inclusion in the A-F formula in hopes of more adequately controlling for the relationship among a school’s socioeconomic factors and the number of A-F points assigned (Attachment 2C-. Aportela and Laczko-Kerr 2013). The criteria to identify Reward, Focus, and Priority schools throughout the state utilizes both the “typical” growth identified by the median as well as the percentage of growth scores considered to be exceptionally high. Regardless of socioeconomic factors and subgroup membership, the SGP should only consider the academic achievement of like students.

**Figure 2A.xi Percentage of Students with High SGP (>75) by Subgroup**

Students considered to be in the Bottom 25% of performance at their respective schools may represent a variety of achievement levels; however, the intended focus of the Bottom 25% of students at all schools emphasizes the academic achievement of these students in order to close achievement gaps, whether they exist among extremely affluent schools or extremely impoverished schools. Still, non-Title I schools show greater proportions of students with high growth scores even when considering subgroup membership (Figure 2.A.xi.). For this reason, Arizona will include both the percentage of students in the B25 with high SGP as well as the percentage of students in the B25 who score below the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile in the state in its determination of Focus schools. These two pieces of data were absent from the A-F data reported to schools for summative, high stakes purposes and formative, program planning purposes. The interim method of holding Arizona schools accountable takes into consideration the legacy of the information provided to schools as well as an increase in potential utility for Arizona educators to use these data for formative as well as summative purposes. Part of the criteria to identify a Focus school includes students who perform in the lowest quartile within the school level and the lowest quartile within the state for that subject and grade level for purposes of intensive intervention. The application of the Reward, Focus, Priority criteria statewide will provide much more information to schools about the performance of their lowest achieving students, which will better align school accountability with student achievement.

Table 2A.10 shows the number of students excluded in 2014 from AYP calculation because of the “*n*-count” rule, by subgroup. The state system does not allow schools to forego evaluation for any qualifying student. The Department pools two additional years of data in order to increase the *n*-count appropriately for any school with less than 30 FAY test records in a single fiscal year. The state system also differs from ESEA in that all schools are accountable for the academic achievement of their combined subgroup – the school’s Bottom 25%. The interim state system also prioritizes the gaps between the lowest performing students and their peers and maintains the high rate of inclusion not possible under ESEA/AYP.



**Table 2A.10 FY 2011 Title I Schools - # of Students Excluded from AMO Determinations and # of Schools not held Accountable for Subgroups under ESEA for Reading**

Subgroup	Number of Students Excluded	Number of Schools with Any Students Excluded	Percent of Schools with Any Students Excluded
ELL	3,464	1,077	88%
SPED	3,967	1,122	91%
FRL	1,892	595	48%
Asian	1,888	740	60%
Black	2,874	913	74%
Hispanic	2,524	774	63%
Native American	2,417	923	75%
White	3,084	923	75%

Note: The numbers represent reading; however, the numbers from the mathematics data did not vary greater than 3 students in any category – with the exception of the number of students with disabilities excluded (i.e., Reading = 3,967; Mathematics = 3,864).

### *Assessment Participation Rates*

ADE strongly believes schools should administer the statewide assessment to all students, as mandated in state statute (A.R.S. §15-241 and §15-755), because we believe compliance is essential to a robust accountability system. The A-F Letter Grade System holds all schools accountable to testing at least 95% of their students on the statewide assessments in the current year. Table 2A.11 below illustrates how schools are held accountable to the percentage of students tested.

**Table 2A.11 Maximum Allowable Points and Letter Grades based on Percent of Students Tested**

Percentage of Students Tested	Maximum Letter Grade Allowed	Eligible Points
95% or more	A	200
85-94%	B	139
75-84%	C	119
Less than 75%	D	99

If a school tests greater than 95% of their students, they are eligible to earn an ‘A’ letter grade. However, the highest letter grade a school can earn is limited *if* the percentage of students tested is less than 95%. For example, schools testing between 85% and 94% of its students are only eligible to receive up to a letter grade of ‘B’. Schools testing fewer than 75% of its students are only eligible to receive up to a ‘D’ letter grade. It is also possible for an ‘A’ school to earn a ‘D’, if the school tests fewer than 75% of its students. This consequence is intentional because schools failing to account for all students during testing are excluding substantial proportions of their students from state-mandated testing, which limits their ability to gauge school and student achievement. In an effort to reinforce this policy of LEA’s testing at least at least 95% of their student population, starting school year 2012-201 a criterion was added to the final determinations of AMOs, so if a school is out of compliance, the school and LEA will be designated as “Not Met” for AMOs.

In the initial year of the AzMERIT assessment, Arizona will hold all schools accountable for testing all students enrolled in grades 3-8 in Mathematics and ELA on the corresponding grade level assessment. Arizona will use the grade level assessment in Mathematics and Reading only in order to

measure test participation rates for students enrolled at these grade levels. Whereas AIMS was administered after a student's second year in high school, the shift to a new assessment for high school students requires student enrollment in a high school level course corresponding to an appropriate End-of-Course test in either English/Language Arts or a high school level Mathematics course. The sequence of courses and when students are exposed to the instructional content are local decisions based on the LEA protocol but especially based on the needs of students. To ensure all students are assessed at least once in high school prior to graduation, Arizona will use NCSC for high school students with significant cognitive disabilities in Grade 11. The incongruence among the use of End-of-Course testing in high school for the general population of students and a high school content assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities presents unique challenges. Arizona previously used a cohort based measure of test participation in the second year of high school. However, this means students with significant cognitive disabilities currently in Grade 11 will assess on NCSC after subsequently testing on AIMS A in the 2013-2014 school year.

With the introduction of End-of-Course testing and a new high school content assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities, Arizona pledges to ensure all students are assessed in Mathematics and English/Language Arts at least once during their high school tenure. While schools will be held appropriately accountable for student achievement on all End-of-Course tests administered, all End-of-Course tests correspond with the minimum course credits needed for an Arizona high school diploma. Until all students eligible to enroll in high school level courses can assess on the corresponding AzMERIT End-of-Course exam, Arizona will build a longitudinal bank of AzMERIT assessments for students to ensure test participation in grades 3 through 8 as well as high school, beginning in the 2014-2015 school year. Cohort 2018 will be the first graduating cohort eligible to assess on all End-of-Course assessments. At this point, Arizona can use a bank of End-of-Course tests to establish if the high school student had been assessed the appropriate number of times by Grade 11.

Due to the nature of End-of-Course testing, as well as the timing of assessment for high school students with significant cognitive disabilities, all high school schools will be held accountable for the assessment in Mathematics and English/Language Arts for all students by the time they complete Grade 11. This approach also minimizes the occurrence of punitive consequences for high schools which serve a larger proportion of advanced middle school students who complete all high school required coursework prior to the year in which they enroll in Grade 11. However, this approach also requires the Department to consider whether a Grade 11 student assessed on a high school level test while enrolled in the two prior years.

All ELA and Mathematics assessments administered at the school may count toward the calculation of the percent of students passing at the school; this includes students assessed on any End-of-Course exam, students who assess on an End-of-Course exam and a grade level assessment, as well as students who complete the alternate assessment. Arizona will continue to hold schools accountable for the percentage of students passing Mathematics and Reading by aggregating these results so each record is counted.

Arizona will incorporate the same process used under IDEA to identify any LEA who exceeds the 1.0 percent cap into the state's A-F Letter Grade System. LEAs will be notified if they have exceeded the 1.0 percent cap and which proficient scores will count as non-proficient at schools in the LEA. This determination is based on the additional data collected regarding the eligibility

determination process for student(s) assessed with AIMS A (IEP and MET). ADE will assist any LEA who meets the criteria in 34 CFR Sect 200.13(c)(5)(1) (i.e., small LEA, LEA with special schools) in filing an appeal for an exception to the 1.0 percent cap.

To ensure test participation for all students, a school's proficiency rates would be impacted if the school tests less than 95%. The method to calculate the school's passing rate might affect the ability to compare these data points from year to year. However, since more than 95% of Arizona schools assess at least 95% of their students on the statewide assessment, there is no major deviation statewide by counting untested students as a "zero" or not passing, so that the percent passing is based on 95% of students who should have assessed at the school.

The treatment of schools with small n-counts could result in a "pass" for AYP and AMO evaluation; however, the A-F System used three years of pooled data in order to determine an overall letter grade. Arizona will continue to pool three years of data so small schools are no longer exempt from particular labels under the former criteria. For schools which qualify for three year data pooling due to low current year assessment data, the methodology to hold schools accountable for low test participation in the current year will impact proficiency results by allowing only up to 95% of the pooled proficiency results to be counted. For small schools which do not test the minimum requirement of students in a single year, the inclusion of prior year's data allowed for a greater adjusted proficiency rate when the method for holding traditional schools accountable were applied. To clarify, the adjustment of the denominator based on a single year for pooled data had the potential to increase the proficiency rates for small schools which tested less than 95% in a single year. However, adjusting the proficiency rate of the pooled data to allow only the proportion tested in the single year caused disproportionately punitive results due to the weight of a single student in a single year for small schools. All schools regardless of size are held accountable for testing up to 95% of students and the proficiency rates used for accountability purposes are directly associated with this requirement. Arizona's criteria for identifying Reward, Focus, and Priority schools ensure all schools are evaluated regardless of size and type.

**Table 2A.12 Comparison - Average Statewide Assessment Proficiency Rates for 3 Years with 95% Adjustment**

School Year	Mean	Std. Deviation
2013-2014 (2014 A-F calculation)	.70	.149
2013-2014 (New 95% adjusted)	.70	.158
2012-2013	.70	.147
2011-2012	.69	.156

A Pearson correlation coefficient confirms a high level of agreement amongst the original calculation of the percentage of students passing the statewide assessment and the adjustment for schools which tested less than 95% of all students required to assess. Test participation for the majority of Arizona schools and students has typically exceeded 95% with the exception for populations with high mobility rates such as English Language Learners and at-risk students attending Alternative (Credit Recovery) schools. Although a larger percentage of schools fall short of testing at least 95% of ELL students on AZELLA, these schools typically fail the minimum

requirement due to a very small number of students; thus, the correlation between the true proficiency rates and the adjusted proficiency rates are minimally impacted for even our ELL subgroup (Table 2A.13).

**Table 2A.13 Comparability of Proficiency Rates Adjusting for > 95% Test Participation**

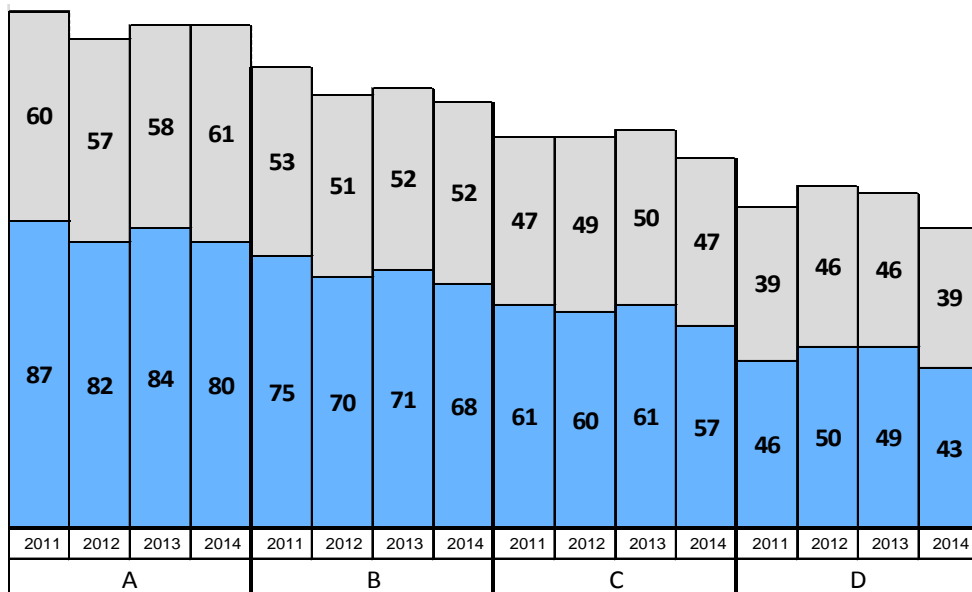
Percentage of schools by type which tested $\geq 95\%$ on assessment		Pearson correlation
AIMS and AIMS A Traditional Schools	95.75%	.989
AIMS and AIMS A Alternative Schools	87.07%	.945
AZELLA (all schools)	*80.6%	.994

\*Schools with min  $n$ -count only

### ***Student Growth Percentiles (SGP)***

Arizona's move to new assessments measuring College and/or Career Ready Standards will impact the production and release of growth data during the fall of 2015. Growth percentiles can be calculated between AIMS and AzMERIT results; quantile regression underlying the student growth percentiles allows for a robust growth measure with appropriate inference. However, analyses will need to be conducted to determine the validity of the growth results. The calculation of student growth percentiles will take place once all relevant assessment data is provided by the test vendor. ADE will consult a technical advisory group then conduct a series of studies to estimate the validity of the derived student growth percentiles (SGP) paying special attention to the distribution of student rankings as they relate to the mode of test administration. Given the SGP prove valid and reliable for purposes of estimating normed student growth, these SGP data based on the 2014-2015 test administration will be reported publicly in the winter of 2016. Figure 2A.xii outlines the annual impact of a school's growth score in relation to proficiency for each letter grade for the last four years. Compared to proficiency, the use of SGP does offer more reliability across fiscal years and performance levels.

**Figure 2A.xii Annual Impact of School Growth Scores versus Proficiency Scores on A-F Letter Grades**



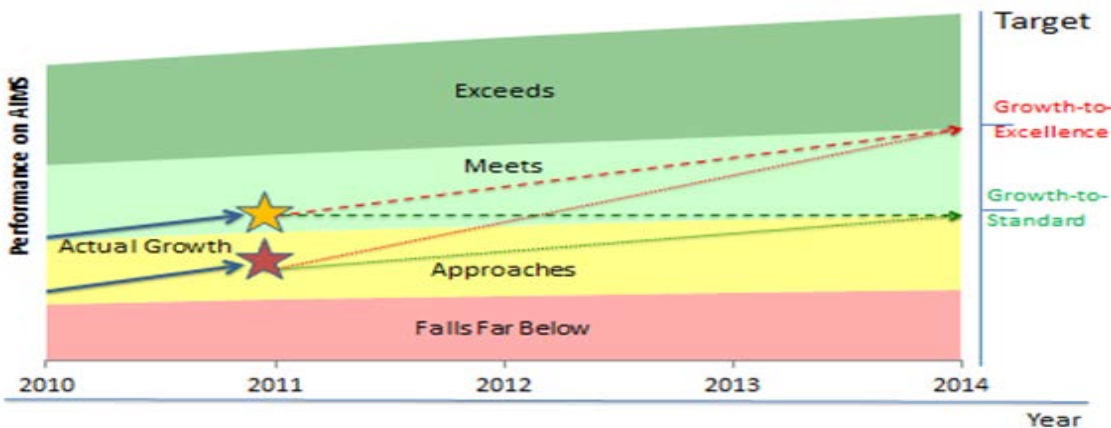
Researchers of Arizona’s A-F system posit SGP as a fairer method to measure a school’s contribution to student learning, but “its use in the A-F Letter Grading system does not meaningfully alter the negative relationship between the level of poverty in the school and the final school rating” (Attachment 2C- Apportela and Laczko-Kerr 2013). Until Arizona’s final system is adopted, growth scores outside a letter grade will be utilized in a less processed manner by evaluating the distribution of students with high versus low growth scores across the achievement spectrum. Regardless of Title I status and/or other demographic data, alternative application of SGPs in the state accountability system can impact the overall accountability determination.

The purpose of the growth component is to acknowledge the academic growth of students within a school or LEA, even if a student has not yet reached grade-level proficiency. Arizona uses a student-level growth measure – Student Growth Percentiles – to describe each student’s academic gains relative to other students who begin at the same starting point. Including a longitudinal student growth component into an accountability system is particularly important because it recognizes the degree to which the lowest achieving students strive to “gain ground” academically from one year to the next.

Conceptually, a student growth percentile represents the amount of academic growth for an individual student compared to other students in the same grade who share the same AIMS scale scores. This establishes a student’s peer group that takes into account test performance in reading and mathematics in the five most recent years in order to establish more precise peer groups. An individual’s growth is then compared to his or her peers who scored the same or similar in subsequent years. The growth percentile represents how much growth an individual student has made relative to academic peers so that only academic achievement is compared from one year to the next. Every student attending the state’s public schools (e.g., ELL, students with disabilities, etc.) who takes the AIMS is included in the SGP calculation. Arizona originally proposed use of Student Growth Targets to chart each student’s path to proficiency by identifying the necessary growth percentile a student needs to reach in order for each student to get on- or stay on-track toward proficiency. SGT can be calculated after three complete test administrations of Arizona’s new assessment.

To determine each student’s Student Growth Targets, the state begins with their current grade-level performance. Using this as the starting point, we can then project the growth each student would need in order to maintain or attain proficiency within 3 years or grade 10, whichever comes first. These student growth targets are criterion-based because individual growth is relative to state performance standards by measuring academic growth toward proficiency against state standards.

To illustrate how the SGT can be understood, take the example provided in Figure 2.A.xiii. The state begins by identifying the student’s current year status. In this case, the student indicated by the red star is below grade level, having performed in the “Approaches” category, below the proficiency mark. In order to reach proficiency within 3 years, this student would need relatively high growth. To reach academic excellence, indicated by scoring in the “Exceeds” category, this student would need extremely high growth. Now, take for example, the student indicated by the gold star. This student was proficient in the current year, having scored in the “meets” category on the AIMS test. However, without high levels of growth in the next three years, this student will not be college- and career-ready in mathematics by grade 10.

**Figure 2A.xiii Examples of Student Growth**

To reach these targets, a lower status student will need very high, sustained growth to get on track for college- and career-readiness. For high achieving students, only modest growth is required to stay on grade level. However, for these excelling students, simply staying above the proficient mark is not a high enough benchmark; schools must work to inspire their best students and push them beyond their perceived limits. These efforts can be measured by assessing not just whether students made adequate growth meet the minimum state standards, but whether or not their growth puts them on a path to excellence.

Armed with this information, school leaders, teachers, and parents can understand not just a student's current status, but the direction in which this student is headed, and can intervene in time if necessary. This focus on individual students provides incentives to acknowledge and count the growth of *ALL* students. Achievement gaps are measured for *each* student against the mark of college- and career-readiness, rather than just measuring differences between groups. In this way, the state sets high, on-going expectations for all subgroups. ADE strives for all students who move through Arizona's system, today and into the future, to be ready for higher education and the careers that await them.

Student Growth Targets data can help LEAs and school administrators guide appropriate instructional interventions and supports based on site-specific needs. In addition, teachers can use Student Growth Targets information to differentiate instruction for individual students and use this information at the classroom level. In particular, teachers need to know what level of growth is required for students to reach proficiency within 3 years in order to plan instruction accordingly.

Likewise, schools and teachers in high performing schools benefit from this information by knowing what is required to maintain proficiency and to encourage their students to reach for excellence. This prevents a "slump" in test scores following attainment of proficiency, and allows for intervention with students who have declined since meeting proficiency to move them further above the cut score. In addition to SGP, SGT will provide educators with additional data to inform instruction; however, three years of assessment data are required in order to produce these SGT data points. Whereas SGP might be used to measure the growth compared to academic peers for students on outer, opposite ends of the achievement spectrum, SGT can provide criterion based information regarding student performance compared to their prior years' scores. To illustrate dual usage, a low-achieving student might require significant gains in order to "catch up" to peers using the SGT



metric; however, the SGP may reveal high performance or gains relative to prior year achievement and the achievement of similar academic peers.

### ***How does the Bottom Quartile relate to ESEA Subgroups?***

The bottom quartile of students is defined for each school and district as students among the bottom quartile of performance on the reading and mathematics sections of the AIMS test in the prior year. For example, 2010 AIMS scores are used to identify the bottom quartile of a school's students for the 2011 calculation. This group is identified each academic year based on prior year performance. This information is critical for teachers to have when students start the school year, so that they can target academic interventions to bring those students back on track to college- and career-readiness.

The focus on accountability for traditional ESEA subgroups is predicated on a false premise that a student who is a member of a traditionally lower performing subgroup must be low performing, simply by being a member of the subgroup. Using a bottom quartile does not focus on the performance of subgroups because these traditional subgroups are not the focus of Arizona's efforts. Rather, ALL students who are struggling will receive the attention and focus they need, regardless of subgroup membership.

Indeed, focusing on traditional subgroups potentially takes attention away from those who really need it – the struggling students. Interventions should be targeted to individual student needs and be formulated based on the student's status, not the traditional status of their subgroup. If schools focused their attention on serving students in these subgroup populations, that could be to the detriment of struggling students who were not in “historically” low performing subgroups.

However, the data from 2011 does illustrate the students who struggle academically in Arizona are disproportionately minority, low income, English Language Learners, and special education students. Arizona's bottom quartile is comprised of a high percentage of the students in these traditional NCLB subgroups, and a focus on this single combined subgroup will promote clarity and increase the proportion of schools held accountable for subgroup performance.

In data from the 2010-2011 school year, the state found within the ESEA subgroups of ELLs and special education, students were predominantly in the bottom quartile (Table 2A.14). Over two-thirds the SPED students were in the bottom quartile in their school in reading and in mathematics. For ELL students, the proportion in the bottom quartile was greater in reading than in mathematics, but even in mathematics, over half of the ELL students were in the bottom quartile. The distribution for students who qualified for Free or Reduced Lunch was also greater in the bottom quartile.

**Table 2A.14 Percentage of Students by Subgroups in Each Quartile - Reading and Mathematics**

Quartile	Reading			Mathematics		
	ELL	FRL	SPED	ELL	FRL	SPED
1	67%	29%	69%	57%	29%	65%
2	23%	26%	17%	27%	26%	19%
3	8%	24%	9%	12%	24%	10%
4	2%	21%	5%	5%	21%	6%



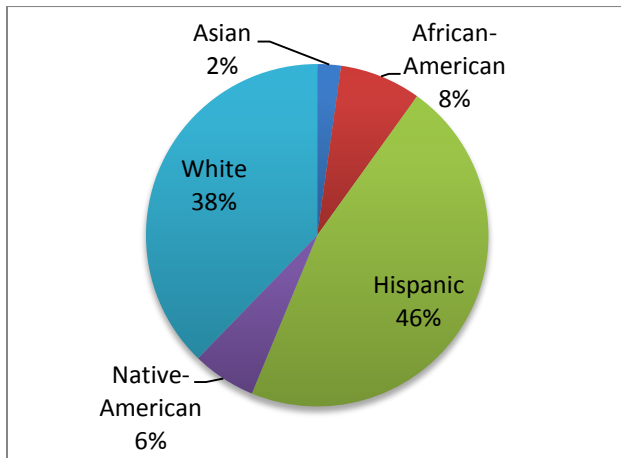
The distribution among the race/ethnicity groups was not uniform (Table 2.A.15.). The lower the quartile, the higher the proportion of minority groups, with the exception of Asian students. As an example for Reading shown in Figures 2.A.xiv and 2.A.xv, the bottom quartile has more African-American, Hispanic, and Native American students, relative to the remainder of quartiles.

**Table 2A.15 Percentage of Students by Race/Ethnicity in Each Quartile - Reading and Mathematics**

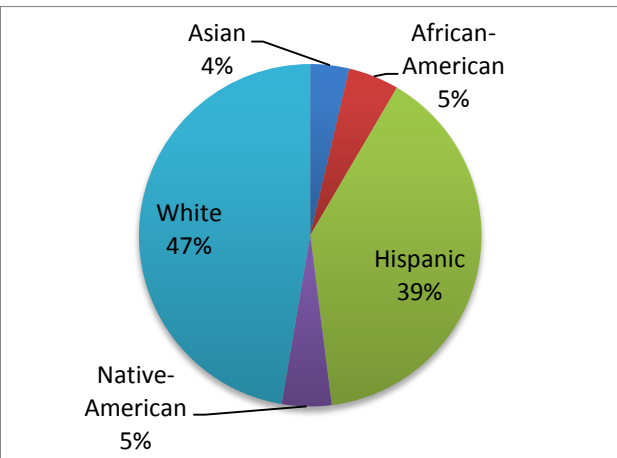
	Quartile	Asian	African-American	Hispanic	Native American	White
<b>Reading</b>	Q1	20%	31%	28%	30%	21%
	Q2	22%	26%	27%	27%	24%
	Q3	26%	23%	24%	24%	26%
	Q4	32%	19%	21%	20%	29%
<b>Mathematics</b>	Q1	17%	35%	28%	30%	21%
	Q2	20%	27%	26%	27%	24%
	Q3	25%	22%	24%	24%	26%
	Q4	38%	17%	21%	20%	29%

**AIMS Reading, by Ethnic Group**

**Figure 2A.xiv Bottom Quartile**



**Figure 2A.xv Quartiles 2-4**



To further illustrate the academic struggles among the bottom quartile across all grades, only 20% of the students in the bottom 25% were proficient in the 2011 AIMS Mathematics assessment and 37% were proficient in AIMS Reading compared to three-quarters of all other students who were proficient in the same content areas. Additionally, in mathematics 77% of the students who were in the “Falls Far Below” category in 2010 (the lowest performance level) on AIMS remained in that category in 2011. For reading, 46% of the students who were in the “Falls Far Below” category in 2010 on AIMS remained in the same category in 2011 and over 50% of students staying in the “Approaches” category in both 2010 and 2011. As stated previously, the bottom quartile represents the lowest performing students within a school based on prior year test scores. Thus, ADE asserts that the state’s bottom quartile is representative of the student subgroups that need the most academic attention and the state’s proposal intends to serve them well.

### *Identifying the Bottom Quartile Student Subgroup*

A continued intention of Arizona’s ESEA Flexibility Request is to meet the needs of more students under the state developed accountability system than were previously served using the former AYP Accountability System. Under the former accountability system, schools were required to make AYP for each grade and subgroup in order for the school to make AYP. However, if the school had less than 40 students in a particular grade/subgroup combination, the grade/subgroup combination was given an automatic “pass” from the AYP determination. Essentially, if a school had 10 grade 5 SPED students, none of those students would be counted in the school’s AYP determination. Comparatively, under the methodology described, ALL SCHOOLS will be held accountable for reading and mathematics performance of the bottom 25% of students, regardless of the students’ race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, or any other subgroup membership. The combining of these subgroups to consider all students in the bottom 25% will hold schools accountable for more students since they will not have to meet the “n count” threshold (40 or more students) for each grade/subgroup combination.

Calculating the bottom quartile of students is based upon achievement on the reading and mathematics sections of the test from the prior year. Student growth percentiles are not used to identify the bottom quartile, but rather, once the bottom quartile of students is identified, the median growth percentile for this group is calculated for a school or district for use in their letter grade formula. This group of students will include the disaggregated subgroups under the current NCLB requirements.

For all students in grades 3<sup>1</sup>-8 and 10, the first step is to calculate the difference between each student’s prior year<sup>2</sup> AIMS scale score and prior year *grade level* AIMS passing cut score (cut score for *Meets*) in mathematics and reading separately.

*Difference* = (Prior Year Scale Score – Prior Year Grade-Level “Pass” Cut Score)

<sup>1</sup>-The AIMS test is not administered in grade 2, but the Stanford 10 Norm-Referenced test is administered to students in Arizona in grade 2. To determine the bottom 25% for grade 3, Stanford 10 total reading and total mathematics scale scores are rank ordered from low to high and separated into quartiles. The median SGPs are determined in the same manner as stated above.

<sup>2</sup>-The AIMS test is not administered in grade 9; thus, for grade 10 students, their grade 9 Stanford 10 scores are used as the “prior year” data in the same manner described above to find the bottom quartile.

Next, a mathematical transformation is used to remove negative numbers and account for the different passing scores in each grade, so that all students could be compared in a school, regardless of grade level. This transformation does not alter the essence of the data because each data point receives the same treatment and is reversible when the data need to be brought back to their original structure.

In this transformation, each student's *Difference* score is weighted by the prior year AIMS "performance level". There are four performance levels for each grade, with vertically scaled cut scores. In this analysis, a numeric value between 1 and 4 is assigned to the grade-appropriate performance level, as follows:

- 1 = Falls Far Below
- 2 = Approaches
- 3 = Meets
- 4 = Exceeds

Finally, the numeric performance level is multiplied by 1,000, which adjusts for negative values from the *Difference* score but keeps the students in the same ordinal ranking. This step is calculated separately for high schools.

*Adjusted Difference* = (Difference + [AIMS performance level x 1,000])

For each school, across all grades served, students' *Adjusted Difference* scores are rank ordered from low to high by subject and separated into quartiles. The lowest quartile of students in reading and mathematics represent a school's lowest performing students – the bottom 25%. The growth percentiles of each student in this group are then used to determine the median growth score in reading and mathematics within each school.

The method described above may be adjusted appropriately in response to the new scale presented by Arizona's new statewide assessment.

ADE is committed to providing support, instructional resources, and a cooperative strategy to help these struggling schools turn the corner. With appropriate interventions and support, the state believes these schools have an opportunity to increase the academic success of their students toward the goal of becoming career- and college-ready.

A.R.S §15-241 requires that the accountability determination for a school include the school's lowest achieving students. The A-F Letter Grade Accountability System emphasized the growth of this particular group of students at every school because regardless of geographic location or the socioeconomic status of the surrounding community, every school has its lowest achieving students who should be identified and supported. Arizona will continue to emphasize the importance of supporting the lowest achieving students by identifying the scale score at the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile for each subject and grade level and identifying the percentage of a school's Bottom 25% Subgroup which also fall below statewide Bottom Quartile at each subject and grade level (Table 2.A.16.). Furthermore, Arizona's focus on increasing the scale score at the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile at each subject and grade level as a measure for improving student performance statewide aligns with other efforts for results-driven accountability.

**Table 2A.16 2012-2014 AIMS Pass Score and Scale Score at 25<sup>th</sup> Percentile**

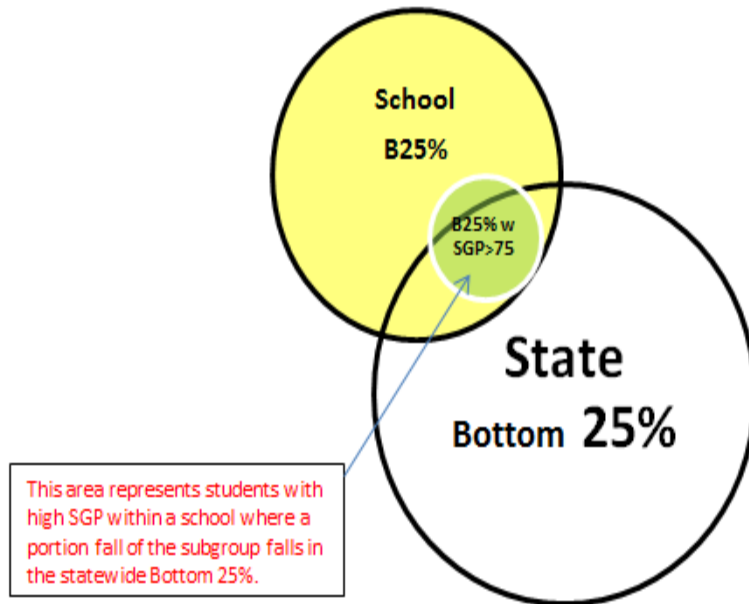
AIMS	Grade/ Cohort	Pass Score	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014
Mathematics	3	347	335	335	337
	4	366	352	350	346
	5	381	364	364	364
	6	398	377	381	379
	7	411	392	395	397
	8	426	402	402	406
	9-12	487	468	470	474
Reading	3	431	428	429	435
	4	450	449	452	452
	5	468	473	473	476
	6	478	486	488	487
	7	489	503	503	509
	8	494	494	492	494
	9-12	674	681	688	689

Still, the scale score at the 25<sup>th</sup> Percentile in both Mathematics and Reading show small upward projections from 2012 through 2014. Over the last three AIMS administrations, the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile scale score across all grades for Mathematics and Reading increased only 1 and 2 points respectively. Analyses of those students who performed in the Bottom Quartile at each subject and grade level statewide provides another opportunity to focus on the academic achievement of the traditional NCLB subgroups in true need of support. To illustrate, the percentage of a school's bottom 25% subgroup which also falls below the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile statewide may range anywhere from 0 to 100%. Schools, where a large percentage of their Bottom Quartile Student Subgroup score under the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile statewide, may implement more drastic interventions than those schools where only a portion of their subgroup also performed under the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile. Traditionally disadvantaged groups of students over represent the percentage of students who score under the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile in the state at each subject and grade level. These data which were not previously reported through A-F accountability are especially important for Title I schools; specifically, the percentage of FRL and SPED students who scored under the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile has incrementally increased in both subjects from 2012 to 2014 although the percentage of ELL and FEP students who scored within this score band has decreased in that same time frame and those same content areas. Placing a greater emphasis on our schools' lowest achieving students as well as the state's lowest achieving students upholds the true intent of NCLB in a more data-driven, results-oriented manner than was afforded by AYP.

Arizona schools can make a collective effort to ensure all students benefit from the transition toward higher standards without leaving certain groups behind based on their demographics. All schools identified as Reward, Focus, or Priority, regardless of Title I status, will meet criteria which are clearly identified based on multiple measures absent from the A-F Letter Grade Accountability System as well as AYP. Without a doubt, the number of points a school receives under any accountability system should not show strong associations with zip code; a disaggregated focus on student achievement, subgroup gaps, and increasing annual goals can also address the increasing

proportion of economically disadvantaged students and students with exceptional needs falling into the lowest quartile of student performance statewide. In the short time period since higher standards were introduced, Arizona schools have reported measurable improvement; however, the transition of our accountability system will ensure that all students benefit from these higher expectations of educators and schools.

**Figure 2A.xvi Increased Focus on the Bottom 25%**

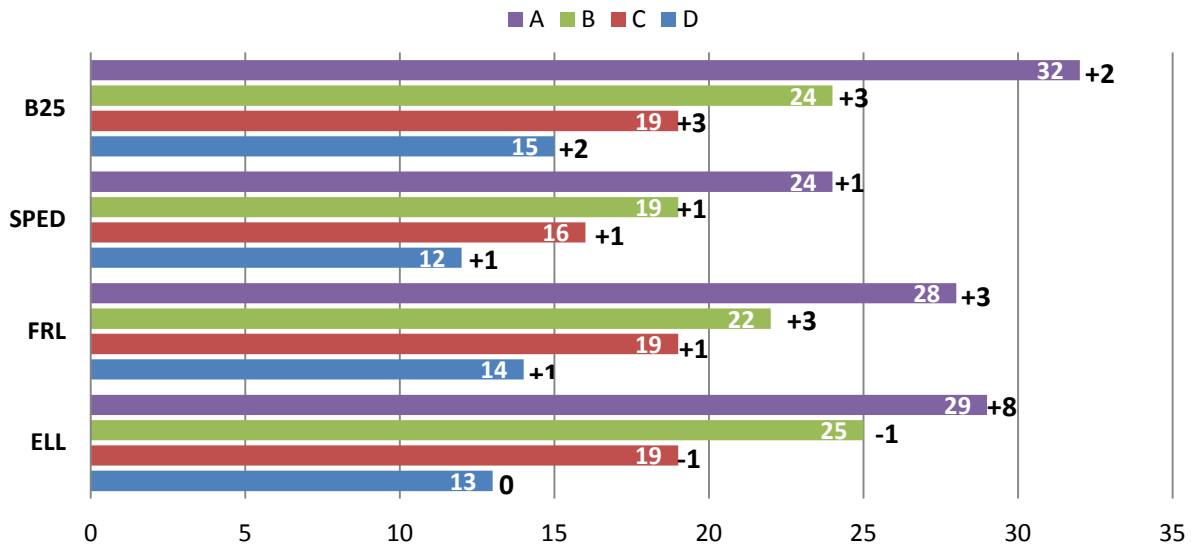


In Figure 2A.xvi, the State Bottom 25% refers to all students who scored under the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile in their respective subject and grade level in that single year (Table 2.A.16.). School B25% refers to the lowest achieving students within a school across all subjects and grade levels as described previously. B25% with SGP greater than 75 identifies students considered among the lowest achieving students at the school (School B25%) and possibly within the state also who had higher growth than their academic peers statewide. In theory, an accountability system should credit a school when a high percentage of their combined subgroup (B25) posts growth greater than 75% of their academic peers (SGP>75) but still has a high overlap in the state bottom 25%. Arizona may consider adding other measures of student growth when it has acquired enough assessment data to reliably estimate growth on the new statewide assessment.

Understanding the student growth target and the multiple years of new assessment data required for this type of student detail will delay the ability to utilize this metric in our state system until FY2018; however, the increased focus on Arizona's bottom 25% subgroup will recognize high growth of students considered to be among the lowest achieving within a school as well as within the state. The inclusion of this measure will acknowledge the effectiveness of schools with the most challenged populations while directly crediting schools for effective interventions on its lowest achieving students. The underlying tenets of Title I and No Child Left Behind align with the assumption that targeted supports and interventions can bolster student achievement; although not

explicitly called out, the percentage of students with high SGP matched the gradation of the 2014 A-F Letter Grade Accountability System among letter graded Title I and non-Title I schools. Title I schools tended to outperform non-Title I schools in the percentage of Bottom 25% students (school subgroup) with high SGPs (Figure 2A.xvii); the percentage of students in an NCLB subgroup with high SGPs also played a larger role in the letter grade performance of Title I schools which further validates the expanded yet modified inclusion of SGPs in the state accountability system.

**Figure 2A.xvii Percentage of High SGP Students by Grade Level and Subgroup - Non-Title I Schools vs. Title I Schools**



### *Inclusion of English Language Learners' Achievement on AZELLA*

All students with an ELL Need in the current or prior fiscal year must be tested on the Spring 2015 AZELLA Reassessment (see ARS 15-756.05). All schools are accountable to testing at least 95% of their students with an ELL Need in the current or prior fiscal year. Schools are also accountable to reclassifying their ELL students as fluent English proficient (FEP), which means that students obtain an Overall Proficiency Level of proficient on the AZELLA. ADE will adjust the percentage of students tested in order to acquire an accurate percentage of AZELLA Percent Proficient. First, the percentage of students with an ELL Need tested will be calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Percentage of students with an ELL need tested on AZELLA} = 100 * \frac{\text{No. of Students with an ELL need Tested on the Spring 2015 AZELLA Reassessment}}{\text{No. of Students with ELL Need Enrolled on Last Day of Spring AZELLA Reassessment}}$$

Schools testing less than 95% of their students with an ELL Need on the Spring 2015 AZELLA Reassessment will receive an adjustment to their percentage of students counted as proficient, while

schools that tested 95% or more of their students with an ELL Need on the Spring 2015 AZELLA Reassessment will receive no adjustment. This adjustment will be utilized to calculate the final AZELLA percent proficient at each school. Schools that require an adjustment will have untested students added to the denominator of the calculation; essentially, the difference between 95% of the students required to test and the number of students tested will count as “zero” or not passing in the numerator. For all schools which assess less than 95% of students on AZELLA, all students required to test multiplied by (.95) and subtracted from the number of students required to test will be added to the denominator:

$$\text{Percentage of ELL students proficient} = 100 * \frac{\text{No. of ELL students with an Overall Proficiency Level of } \mathbf{\text{Proficient}} \text{ on the Spring 2015 AZELLA Reassessment}}{\text{No. of ELL students with an Overall Proficiency Level on the Spring 2015 AZELLA Reassessment}}$$

Quartiles will be identified with the **adjusted** percent proficient data. Schools identified in the lowest quartile have the potential to be Focus schools specifically for low-achieving subgroup. With a total number of 85,042, ELLs accounted for approximately 7% of all K-12 students in Arizona during FY 2014. In order to best serve our ELL population, the Arizona State Department of Education (ADE) developed a system to identify, assess, and reclassify English Language Learners (ELLs). According to the Department of Education Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as Amended by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB), State Educational Agencies (SEAs) and LEAs are to ensure that students who have limited English skills “attain English language proficiency, attain high levels of academic achievement in English, and meet the same challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards that all children are expected to meet.” ADE is committed to providing guidance, assistance, and support to all of Arizona’s school districts and charter schools charged with the educational needs of Arizona’s ELL population.

Arizona will continue to monitor the progress of English Language Learners during the A-F hiatus by integrating results of the AZELLA in the identification of Reward and Focus schools. Requiring high rates of ELL reclassification in order to identify Reward schools statewide prioritizes the English language acquisition of this subgroup beyond the statewide assessment. Also, acknowledging low rates of ELL reclassification by using AZELLA reclassification rates as a criterion for Focus status highlights the performance of this subgroup whereas previous Focus criteria did not include this measure.

In FY 2013 AZELLA exit criteria became more rigorous with students needing to score proficient in Reading, Writing, and the Total Combined scores. If all three of these criteria are met, a student will be classified with an Overall Proficiency Level of “Proficient.” Despite these changes, 72% of students who were first year ELL in FY 2012 (ELL Cohort 2012) reclassified within three years. After reclassifying, fluent English proficient (FEP) student performance is compared to non-ELL students on the statewide assessment (AIMS in FY 2014). Specifically, in FY 2014 all FEP students (FEP 1 – first year after reclassification; FEP 2 – second year after reclassification; FEP 3 – third year after reclassification; FEP 4+ - four or more years after reclassification) students matched or exceeded the rate of passing AIMS Reading in grades 3, 4 and 5. In grades 6 and 7, FEP 3 and FEP 4+ students held constant or outperformed non-ELLs. In grades 8 and HS FEP students do not



perform as well, often because the content becomes far more complex. Identical trends are found for AIMS Mathematics with FEP students by grade. When comparing ELL student growth on the statewide assessment to non-ELL student growth, ELL students showed the highest average scale score gains from FY 2012 to FY 2013 and FY 2012 to FY 2014 in both AIMS Reading and AIMS Mathematics compared to non-ELL students.

Schools have ample opportunity to appeal an accountability determination which may impact their ability to operate a charter or afford students and teachers rights for schools deemed “below average” according to criteria adopted by the State Board of Education. In the past, a “D” or “D-ALT” letter grade defined these schools. As required by A.R.S. 15-241(N), ADE affords local education agencies (LEAs) an opportunity to substantively appeal (see Attachment 2F. Accountability Determination Appeal Documents) its accountability profile before it is finalized. The process, which was approved by the State Board of Education in Spring 2014, allows LEAs to challenge the accountability determination assigned by the ADE. FY 2014 was the inaugural year of the Expedited (desktop review) and Non-Expedited (in-person) appeals process. ADE expanded the appeals process allowing for appeal of final letter grade, to increase transparency and guidance in the appeals process, and to give schools more opportunity to demonstrate their appeal by conducting in-person appeals and providing written feedback of the appeal decision.

Arizona does not allow appeals of the formula upon which accountability profiles are based, demographic make-up of student population, data within the control of the school/LEA at any point in time, and individual student characteristics. Appellants who selected the Non-Expedited appeal were given an opportunity to appear before a committee of Arizona education professionals to present the basis for the appeal. The committee may engage the appellant in questioning and also reviews data to determine whether the appeal should be granted. Determinations of the committee become the final decision of Arizona for the LEA. The committee conducts both the desktop review and the in-person appeals making final decisions for all appeals submitted. Additionally, the committee determines if the appeal is substantive and whether it should be discussed; appeals that are deemed non-substantive are not reviewed. All substantive appeals are reviewed on a standard rubric that was returned to the appellant with any notes taken by the committee members, if applicable. Non-substantive appeals were reviewed on a separate rubric that was also returned to the appellant. The committee is comprised of members of K-12 Academics in Arizona. Committee members were selected from the pool of applicants who applied. Additionally, committee members were sought from diverse backgrounds and levels (i.e., traditional schools, alternative schools, charters schools, Superintendents, Directors of Research, etc.) to ensure that all school types were represented. Committee members were asked to recuse themselves from an appeal if a conflict of interest existed. This thoughtful review process exemplifies Arizona’s commitment to operationalizing the soundest system possible while still affording rights to schools based on high stakes decisions.

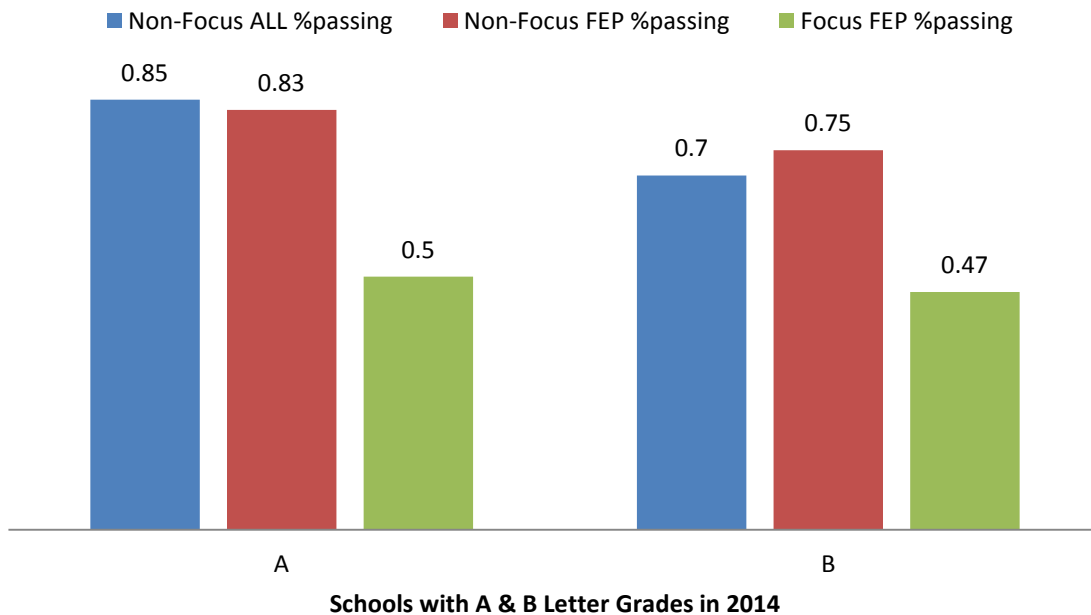
The multiple criteria which compose an aggregate label may reduce the number of schools appealing a letter grade since those will no longer be issued under SB 1289. However, the new criteria quantitatively align with the 2014 A-F Letter Grades where expected; for example, all Reward High Performing schools received the “A” letter grade. Among alternative schools, only schools rated “A-ALT” or “B-ALT” qualified as high performing. However, no alternative schools qualified as Reward High Progress label whereas 34 traditional schools rated “B” received the High Progress recognition. The lack of emphasis of subgroup achievement within the A-F system was most evident

when 58 schools previously rated as “A” or “B” under the traditional model qualified as Focus schools.

The criterion for High progress status requires a school to have earned less than 140 points on the A-F Letter Grade System; for traditional schools, this represents the cut score for the A Letter grade. For alternative schools, this represents the lower end of the “B-ALT” letter grade span. Arizona is prepared to address achievement gaps which may exist among its higher rated schools – approximately 26% of schools identified as a Focus school were rated A or B.

Of the 15 “A” rated schools, the criteria used to identify these schools as meeting the Focus criteria found areas of concern. For example, although one “A” rated high school had proficiency rates in the top half of the state and median growth of all students at the school were rated in the top quartile of the state, the school averaged a 4-year graduation rate of 58% with their most recent four year cohort posting a graduation rate of only 31%. Despite their 82% pass rate, their 4-year graduation rate decreased annually by 11 percentage points on average since 2011. Furthermore, two-thirds of the students in this “A” rated high school’s Bottom 25% subgroup scored below the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile in the respective subject and grade level. The criteria used to identify a Focus school based on their graduation rates effectively detected this school’s area of deficiency which did not impact the overall A-F letter grade. The state-developed Focus criteria prove to be much more rigorous and fulfill the intent of supporting schools which may struggle in key areas.

The relatively low achievement of the FEP students compared to all students qualified 13 “A” schools for Focus status. Similar to business rules employed for ELL accountability within the state’s former A-F formula, only schools which met the state’s *n*-count criterion of 10 students were evaluated on the academic achievement of FEP students. While the Bottom 25% subgroup is typically much larger than the number of FEP students served within the school, proficiency rates of FEP students remained in the lowest quartile of the state for these schools recognized for high achievement. FEP students in non-focus schools rated as A or B in 2014 performed similarly to ALL students (including FEP, ELL, Bottom 25%, etc.), but schools identified as Focus showed notably lower performance for this particular group of students (Figure 2.A.xviii.).

**Figure 2A.xviii Comparison - FEP Percent Passing by Letter Grade and NEW Focus Status**

This is particularly distressing considering the overall performance of FEP students tends to outperform non-ELL peers statewide. Disaggregation of data from multiple perspectives will ensure that students with former English language learning need continue to receive the supports necessary to perform to their full potential at every school including those which have attained the highest label possible in the state system of accountability. Arizona has high expectations for all schools, and all students will have access to excellent education services at schools rated as excellent in a new accountability system.

The majority of schools qualified for Focus status due to Low Achievement of the subgroup; 275 out of 285 of these schools were rated C or D under the A-F system. For both alternative and traditional schools, low Achievement of a subgroup was the primary reason for identification. However, traditional schools tended to be identified just as often for low graduation rate as they were for a within school gap whereas alternative schools were exempt from this criterion. Arizona's lowest performing schools will be identified based on their low performance for multiple years.

The transition to a new assessment and a new accountability system requires thoughtful identification of Priority schools. ADE will recommend the Priority criteria outlined here for the identification of below average schools as outlined in SB1289. Several state laws depend on the identification of a "below average" school – a "D" school under the former A-F system. Rights afforded to teachers, students, and the community within a school deemed "below average" will ideally match the Priority criteria for Title I support and school improvement purposes. However, it is the prerogative of the State Board of Education to adopt the Department's ultimate recommendation that the Priority criteria replace the "D" letter grade implications. The policy decision to streamline the Title I Priority criteria with the identification of below average schools does not impact the Department's ability to identify Priority Low Performing or Priority Low graduation rate schools for support and intervention. The priority criteria currently outlined identifies schools which were among the lowest performing under the A-F system and showed no signs of upward trajectory on a new assessment and over multiple years. The priority criteria also

consider any negative drop in CCRI composite graduation points. Whereas the A-F system may have omitted extremely high dropout rates in the identification of the lowest performing schools, the priority criteria for low graduation rate captured 7 schools previously rated as average in the A-F system – though the typical dropout rate among this handful of schools was 19%. Although these schools were not identified as “alternative schools” in 2014, these schools averaged less than 40% four year graduation rates in each of the last four fiscal years. Although the statewide application of the Reward Focus Priority criteria may bring to light the performance of certain schools unaccustomed to this level of analysis, the intention of rewarding schools which perform excellently or above average as measured by the former A-F system. Similarly, the identification of focus schools annually will constantly measure the effectiveness of academic programs for all students on a continuous basis.

The Reward Focus Priority criteria overlay at both the upper and lower performance levels of the state accountability system. This period of transition will reveal potential growth opportunities for our schools as well as our state system of holding all schools accountable in a manner which exceeds a solely punitive purpose. In the interim, schools labeled as Reward, Focus, or Priority will exhibit performance justifying recognition and/or support as demonstrated by the means and standard deviations indicated below (Mean/SD).

#### Traditional **Reward Schools**

##### ▪ **High Performing**

- Tested  $\geq 95\%$  (1.00/0.01) **AND**
- Percent passing in state top quartile (0.91/0.05) **AND**
- ALL growth in state top quartile (62.92/5.78) **AND**
- B25 growth in state top quartile (67.81/7.69) **AND**
- 4 year grad rate\* in state top quartile (96.10/2.88) **AND**
  - ELL reclassification in state top quartile (0.48/0.18) **OR**
  - Science Percent passing > State Average (84.01/10.71)

##### ▪ **High Progress**

- Tested  $\geq 95\%$  (1.00/0.01) **AND**
- Met AMO
- Less than 140 A-F points in 2014 (135.59/2.81) **AND**
- Percent passing in top half of state (0.74/0.02) **AND**
  - Growth in state top quartile for ALL Students (55.06/4.40) **OR**
  - B25 Subgroup (58.16/5.83) **AND**
  - ELL reclassification\* in state top quartile (0.33/0.16) **OR**
  - Science Percent passing > State Average Science Percent passing (62.18/12.74) **AND**
- 4-year grad rate\* Avg. Annual Change (2011 to CY) in state top quartile (3/3) **OR** 4 year grad rate > state average (73.00/15.59)

### Traditional Focus Schools

- **Within-School Gap**
  - CCRI Grad Avg. Annual Change (2014 to CY) < 0 **OR** (TBD/TDB)
  - Percent passing of All Students group in the top half of the state (0.77/0.06) **AND**
    - Percent passing of B25 subgroup in the lowest quartile of state (34.31/14.18) **OR**
    - FEP1 and 2 percent passing in the lowest quartile (0.46/0.11)
- **Low Achieving Subgroup**
  - Highest quartile of overlap between the school's B25 subgroup and the state Bottom 25% (0.90/0.06) **AND**
    - ELL Reclassification rate in the lowest quartile (0.13/0.11) **OR**
    - Percentage of school's B25 with SGP>75 in the lowest quartile of the state (0.17/0.07)
- **Low Graduation Rate\*\***
  - 4-year graduation rate less than 60% for CY **AND** two prior years (Cohort13: 33.17/19.10; Cohort12: 41.12/26.09; Cohort11: 41.33/27.78) **OR**
  - CCRI Grad ≤ 22 (12.87/6.12) **AND** 4-year grad rate Avg. Annual Change (2011 to CY) < 0 (-4.92/8.88)

### Traditional Priority Schools

- **Lowest Performing Schools**
  - Less than 100 points in 2014 A-F (all models) (85.96/13.02) **AND**
  - CY Percent passing in the lowest quartile (0.44/0.10) **AND**
    - Percent passing in the lowest quartile for two prior fiscal years (FY13: 0.48/0.12; FY12: 0.48/0.14) **OR**
    - CY ALL growth in lowest quartile (35.80/8.40) **OR**
    - CCRI Grad Avg. Annual Change (2014 to CY) < 0 (TBD/TDB)
- **Low Graduation Rate\*\***
  - 4-year graduation rate less than 60% for CY **AND** two prior years (Cohort13: 26.74/15.08; Cohort12: 28.63/18.98; Cohort11: 26.93/17.33) **AND**
  - Dropout rate in highest quartile (16.89/12.31)

When applied statewide, 256 distinct schools (Title I and non-Title I) qualified for Focus status whereas 185 distinct schools qualified for Priority status among both traditional and alternative schools. The criteria captured at least 5% of schoolwide Title I participating schools as Priority status and at least 10% of schoolwide Title I participating schools as Focus. Again, any school which posts a negative CCRI score due to a lower graduation rate and/or persistence rate in the 2014-2015 or 2015-2016 school year could qualify for Focus status.

Additional evidence of concurrent validity exists when comparing the currently identified schools with impact data using new criteria and the most current achievement data availability. Comparing the new criteria to identification based on old criteria, no Reward schools currently submitted in Table 2 for federal identification labels based on prior year AIMS data schools were identified as

Focus or Priority status under the new criteria. One school previously identified as a Focus school would be considered a Reward High Progress school under the new criteria; this school raised proficiency rates by 5% from 2012 to 2014 and increased their annual four year graduation rate by 6% points on average since 2011.

Because the new criteria emphasize the performance of subgroups within the school as opposed to the normed growth of a subgroup or the combined points under all measures within the A-F system, 32 schools previously identified as Focus schools received neither a Focus nor Priority label under the new system. None of these schools received less than a C in 2014; none of these schools decreased a letter grade over the prior year; one-third of these schools increased a letter grade over the prior year; and average proficiency rates on AIMS Mathematics and Reading increased from 53.6% in 2012 to 56.7% in 2013 and then to 57.9% in 2014. After removing the single school which switched methods for calculating points between the two fiscal years, the remaining 31 schools which were previously recognized as Focus schools gained an average of 6 points in the A-F system from 2013 to 2014. Although high schools points were inflated in the two years due to a change in the measurement, only three of these schools were qualifying high schools indicating a genuine improvement among these schools formerly labeled as “focus”.

Of the 45 traditional schools currently carrying a Priority label, 27 continued to carry a priority label and 6 became Focus schools under the new criteria. The 10 of the 12 schools identified as neither Priority nor Focus increased a letter grade over the prior year so none of these schools received a “D” in 2014. These 12 schools jumped in AIMS Mathematics and Reading proficiency rates from 43% in 2012 to an average of 56% in 2014. None of these 12 schools qualified under the low graduation rate criteria either. These data do not categorize the alternative schools formerly identified as Priority. The 8 of the 13 remaining alternative schools previously identified as priority would be captured with a focus or priority label under the new criteria. The 5 schools which went from priority to receiving no label based on 2014 data and new criteria all posted a letter grade gain or maintained a B-ALT letter grade in 2014. None of these schools were qualified for Reward status, however. Two schools labeled as Focus under the former criteria became priority schools under the new criteria based on 2014 achievement data. Both schools declined in A-F points despite the credit of a CCRI composite score in 2014. One school, rated D-ALT in the last two fiscal years, became a Priority Lowest Performing school based on the fact its students scored in the bottom quartile for the last three fiscal years with an average of 21% of students passing in each of those years. The other school also showed declining performance; proficiency remained in the lowest quartile for the last two fiscal years and the typical student growth was at the 28<sup>th</sup> percentile – the lowest quartile for student growth among alternative schools. Two schools formerly labeled Priority based on prior years achievement data will be evaluated on the recently approved qualitative framework – the Measure of Academic Progress – due to untested grades and/or other insufficient data.

**Table 2A.17 Reward, Focus and Priority Categories by Letter Grade – Alt Status**

RFP Category	2014 Letter Grade (+ Alternative)					Grand Total
	A	B	C	D	P	
Reward High Performing	161(3)	0(3)	0	0	0	161(6)
Reward High Progress	0	34	0	0	0	34
Focus Within-School Gap	14	33(5)	2(8)	0(1)	0	49(14)
Focus Low Achieving Subgroup	0	10(9)	141(17)	130(10)	4	285(36)
Focus Low Graduation Rate	1	1	17	23	10	52
Priority Low Graduation	0	0	7	15	5	27
Priority Lowest Performing	0	0	1(2)	156(13)	0	157(15)
Focus Final	15	43(10)	151(19)	5(4)	9	223(33)
Priority Final			8(2)	157(13)	5	170(15)
NOT Labeled	366(7)	499(25)	270(46)	8(5)	47(13)	1190(96)

In order to receive alternative status, schools undergo a thorough vetting process to ensure a mission aligned with credit recovery for students in need of non-traditional academic settings (Attachment 2G- Alt School Guidance). Because alternative schools are compared to the performance of other alternative schools on each criterion, the number and distribution of alternative schools identified as Focus and Priority are impacted. However, this allows for alternative schools to demonstrate Reward status. Performance of alternative schools qualifying under each criterion is described below (Mean/SD).

#### Alternative Reward Schools

##### *High Performing*

- Tested  $\geq 95\%$  (0.99/0.02) **AND**
- Percent passing in state top quartile (0.59/0.10) **AND**
- ALL growth in state top quartile (57.33/8.62) **AND**
- 4 year grad rate\* in state top quartile (59.00/13.80) **AND**
  - ELL reclassification in state top quartile **OR**
  - Science Percent passing > State Average (28.67/16.67)

#### Alternative Focus Schools

##### *Within-School Gap*

- CCRI Grad Avg. Annual Change (2014 to CY) < 0 (TBD/TDB) **OR**
- Percent passing of All Students group in the top half of the state (0.39/0.03) **AND**
  - Percent passing of B25 subgroup in the lowest quartile of state (0/0) **OR**
  - FEP 1 and 2 percent passing in the lowest quartile (0.35/0.21)

##### *Low Achieving Subgroup*

- Highest quartile of overlap between school's B25 subgroup and state Bottom 25% (1/0) **AND**
  - ELL Reclassification rate in the lowest quartile (0.25/0.19) **OR**
  - Percentage of school's B25 with SGP>75 in the lowest quartile of the state (0.01/0.08)



## Alternative Priority Schools

### *Lowest Performing Schools*

- Less than 100 points in 2014 A-F (all models) (84.53/8.86) **AND**
- CY Percent passing in the lowest quartile (0.20/0.06) **AND**
  - Percent passing in the lowest quartile for two prior fiscal years (FY13: 0.26/0.08; FY12: 0.26/0.12) **OR**
  - CY ALL growth in lowest quartile (22.27/6.02) **OR**
  - CCRI Grad Avg. Annual Change (2014 to CY) < 0 (TBD/TDB)

Three A-ALT schools are identified as Reward High Performing schools, as well as three B-ALT schools. These schools are identified because each of them tested more than 95% of their students and ranked in the top quartile in terms proficiency rates for the students tested. In addition to the high pass rates, the growth scores associated with tested students are also in the top quartile. For the B-ALT schools identified as Reward High Performing schools, although exempt from ELL reclassification evaluation, almost all of them had a high current year 4-year graduation rate. No alternative school qualifies as a Reward High Performing school because High Progress recognizes a school's continuing improvement over time on ELL and Graduation rate, in addition to the current year achievement schools made.

Compared to 6 schools recognized as Reward schools, a total of 14 alternative schools qualified as Focus schools due to identified Within-School Gap, and all of them ranked the lowest in percent passing for B25 subgroup. In more detail, with an average pass rate of 39%, all 14 schools had 0% passing for their B25 subgroup. For alternative schools identified as Focus Low Achieving, all of them had 100% overlap between the school's B25 subgroup and the state's bottom 25%. In addition, almost none of those schools had B25 subgroup students who received SGP value larger than 75.

All schools identified as Priority Lowest Performing received a C-ALT or D-ALT label in FY2014. The average percent passing and average growth of this group of schools are 20% and 22%, respectively. The average pass rates of these schools were also quite low (about 26%) for the past two years.

Comparing to the old criteria, the proposed criteria recognized 6 High Performing schools. None of them were identified as High Performing schools and 1 was identified as a Focus school when using the old criteria. This Reward High Performing school identified as a Focus school when using the old criteria exhibited a largely improved percent passing rate compared to the FY2012 and FY2013 rates and an above average growth value of 57. Four Focus schools (1 B-ALT, 2 C-ALT, and 1 D-ALT) were identified as Priority schools based on old criteria. But these schools showed some growth, as the average growth of the three B- and C-ALT schools is 46 and their growth scores all ranked in the top half quartile of the state. The D-ALT school identified as a Focus school has a current year percent passing rate in the top half of the state, which is the reason they were barely kept it in the Focus school category. Using the new criteria, the school will be given a chance to either improve to remain as a Focus school or higher, or fall back to the Priority pool if no improvement was gained. Overall, using the new criteria and procedure, alternative schools were compared among each other rather than to traditional schools as in old criteria, which will provide more insight on how alternatives actually performed during the course of one or more year.

The new criteria address not only chronically low graduation rates, but unacceptably high dropout rates as well. Although alternative schools are exempt from identification based on the low graduation rate criterion alone, the system will account for any negative trend through the composite CCRI score which includes graduation rate as well as the academic persistence of all students. Although the 2014 school year was the first year the CCRI graduation rate composite score was used, any school regardless of alternative status will be identified as a focus school. Because the criteria rely on relative performance on several measures compared to other schools, the criteria to identify Reward, Focus, and Priority schools will be applied to the state's list of alternative schools separately to avoid comparing traditional schools to schools known to have a high concentration of students with low achievement.

Arizona's plan to transition its accountability system emphasizes evaluation of student achievement and continuous improvement at a more granular level than otherwise allowed within the A-F Letter Grade System. The method of holding schools accountable through Reward, Focus, Priority labels depends on student achievement on AZELLA, Mathematics, Reading, and Science. The system accounts for low test participation, as well as the academic performance of former ELL students. During the rebuilding of the state accountability system which will label all schools; the identification and achievement of the lowest performing students throughout our state will drive accountability.

*The following list and tables annotate Arizona's timeline followed while implementing the initial Waiver proposal, as well as the changes added over the past 3 years and the planned timeline for those included in the 2015 Renewal Request. Aside from other Federal reporting throughout the year (e.g., CSPR, ED-Facts, deliverables for Special Education, AMAOs for Title III funding, etc.) the state outlined what this implementation will entail for ADE.*

## **PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE:**

### **2012**

#### **February**

- ADE submits ESEA Flexibility Request to converge the state's new accountability system (adopted in June 2011) with new Student Growth Target (SGT) specifications thus utilizing the growth model to its fullest capacity (i.e., as a normative tool in the A-F Letter Grade System and as a criterion-referenced tool for AMO requirements)

#### **February - April**

- Worked with stakeholders and the State Board of Education to make adjustments to the A-F Letter Grade System (e.g., incorporating Arizona students who take AIMS A)
- Continue outreach and communication efforts with all stakeholders on Arizona's flexibility request

#### **March - May**

- Worked with U.S. Department of Education and stakeholders statewide to fully develop the February ESEA Flexibility Request Proposal into an operational guideline.

#### **April - May**

- Write syntax and troubleshoot for three new A-F Letter Grade accountability models for K-2 schools, Alternative schools, and Small schools

- Research and Evaluation Accountability Advisory Group met to develop and set new SGT targets

### June - July

- Run current A-F Letter Grade System and three new parallel models
- Report Reward, Focus and Priority Schools to USED and ADE School Improvement division for identification for the 2012-2013 school year
- Compute *existing* formulas/AMOs for schools and LEAs

### August

- Communicate with schools and LEAs what the “Focus” and “Priority” labels schools means to them

### September-December

- Communicate and collaborate with stakeholders, educators and Arizona leaders statewide in preparation for implementation of the new accountability system to start the 2013-2014 school year.
- Troubleshoot with ADE IT on automating and making available to every Arizona school new Student Growth Targets for each Arizona student
- Developed training on individual Student Growth Targets and pilot utilization with Arizona Priority Schools
- Calculated the Bottom 25% of students to be used for school accountability for SY13

## 2013

### January

- If agreed upon by stakeholders introduce legislation to incorporate the proposed SGTs into the A-F Letter Grade System as part of the letter grade earned by schools and LEAs

### February - May

- Continued to communicate with stakeholders on how to incorporate the SGTs into the A-F Letter Grade System (pending legislation)

### June - September

- Run the A-F Letter Grade models (including all parallel models) assigning letter grades to all public schools and LEAs
- Calculated the new proposed SGTs for all students statewide
- Calculated and reported AMOs for schools and LEAs

### September - May (2014)

- Arizona high schools held accountable for a 15% CCRI graduation component added to the A-F Letter Grades including an emphasis on a four-year graduation rate but incorporates 5-year, 6-year, and 7-year rates
- Began second year of educator evaluation pilot incorporating SGTs
- Calculated the Bottom 25% of students to be used for school accountability for SY14
- Planned with ADE IT the timeline and the amount of data to be collected
- Communicated with State Board on the transition to the new assessment

**2014****June - July**

- Fully operationalized the A-F Letter Grade System and all parallel models possibly incorporating the SGT system including the Reward designation and updating the list of Focus and Priority schools

**August - October**

- Piloted evaluation systems for extremely small schools and an A-F Letter Grade System for online schools not receiving a letter grade
- Completed the calculations for the remaining 10% of the CCRI

**2015****February**

- Identified criteria for Reward, Focus, and Priority; also “below average” (state)

**March**

- Propose new timeline and criteria to identify “below average” schools to State Board of Education for information only

**April**

- Recommend criteria to identify “below average” schools to State Board of Education for the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school year

**July**

- Begin reporting available 2014-2015 data ASAP

**August**

- Continue Waiver
- A-F Hiatus
- Graduation 4, 5, 6, and 7 year Rate(s)
- Persistence rate
- Dropout rate
- Reclassification on AZELLA rate
- AZELLA Test participation rate
- AIMS and AIMS A Science Proficiency

**October – November (estimated)**

- 2014-2015 student achievement data available

**November**

- College and/or College Readiness Index Information
- ELA/Mathematics/Science Test Participation Rate
- AzMERIT (all subjects) Pass or CCR Rate

**December**

- Draft proposed accountability legislation for upcoming session

**2016****January**

- Submit new AMOs
- Report Student Growth Percentiles
- Report NCSC Pass Rate

**February**

- PILOT Reward, Focus, and Priority Criteria statewide on 2014-2015 data (informational purposes)
- Use new criteria to exit qualifying Cohort 1 Priority and Focus schools, based on 2014-2015 data

**June**

- Public report of 2015-2016 student achievement data
- Apply Reward, Focus, and Priority criteria statewide on 2015-2016 data

**July**

- PILOT new state accountability system based on 2015-2016 data (informational purposes)

**August**

- Begin Year 1 of implementation for newly identified Focus and Priority schools

**2017****June**

- Apply Reward, Focus, and Priority criteria statewide on 2016-2017 data

**July**

- Issue 2017 Accountability determinations based on 2016-2017 data
- Request to realign ESEA Flexibility Request with new state accountability system

Arizona will identify priority schools by January 31, 2016 based on school year 2014-2015 data for implementation beginning no later than the 2016-2017 school year.

**Table 2A.18 Proposed Timeline for Implementation**

**School Year 2011 -2012**

	February	March	April	May	June - July
ESEA	Submit Flexibility Request	Revise Flexibility Request w/USED			Report Reward, Focus, and Priority Schools to US ED and ADE School Improvement
ESEA					Compute new AMOs for schools and LEAs (pending approval from USED)
A-F Letter Grades	Pending SBE approval: Amend A-F Letter Grade System, recommend parallel models - Alternative School, K-2, and Small Schools' models			Write syntax and troubleshoot Parallel Models	Compute 2012 A-F Letter Grades including all 3 parallel models and LEA model
Other Federal deliverables throughout the year (e.g., CSPR, ED-Facts, deliverables for Special Education, AMAOs for Title III funding, etc.)					

**School Year 2012 - 2013**

	<b>August</b>	<b>September - December</b>	<b>January - May</b>	<b>June - July</b>
<b>ESEA</b>				Compute AMOs, and report AMO designation on School Report Cards
<b>A-F Letter Grades</b>	Work with LEAs with Focus and Priority schools	Identify Bottom 25% students  Communicate new SGT system with stakeholders  Work on SGT algorithm  Work with IT to automate SGTs	Trouble-shoot SGT system  Stakeholder communication  Work with IT to put AMO designations on School Report Cards	Compute 2013 A-F Letter Grades all 5 models (4 school models and an LEA model)
<i>Other Federal deliverables throughout the year (e.g., CSPR, ED-Facts, deliverables for Special Education, AMAOs for Title III funding, etc.)</i>				

**School Year 2013 - 2014**

	<b>August</b>	<b>September - May</b>	<b>June - July</b>
<b>ESEA</b>			Produce SGTs for ALL students Report AMO designations on School Report Cards Identify Reward, possibly update Focus and Priority schools
<b>A-F Letter Grades</b>	All schools using ACCRS	Identify students in the Bottom 25% for SY14  Troubleshoot A-F Letter Grade calculation programming  Provide PD statewide on utilizing new SGTs in the classroom  Work with IT on from the new assessment  Communicate with SBE on assessment transition	Replace 15% of high school letter grade determinations with CCRI graduation rate component.  Compute 2014 Letter Grades, all models
<i>Other Federal deliverables throughout the year (e.g., CSPR, ED-Facts, deliverables for Special Education, AMAOs for Title III funding, etc.)</i>			

**School Year 2014 - 2015**

	<b>August</b>	<b>September - May</b>	<b>June - July</b>
<b>ESEA</b>			Pending new assessment data: Report test participation rates
<b>A-F Letter Grades</b>	All schools	Research impact of new assessment on A-F Letter Grade System's growth model and proficiency rates  Identify College and Career Ready indicators for use in the Participation and Success components of CCRI.  Rescale A-F Letter Grade scales for high schools	Report full CCRI data to LEAs  Analyze new assessment data upon earliest availability
<i>Other Federal deliverables throughout the year (e.g., CSPR, ED-Facts, deliverables for Special Education, AMAOs for Title III funding, etc.)</i>			

**Overview**

Arizona's ultimate goal is for all students—regardless of race, ethnicity, income, language or special needs—to receive an education that prepares them for the opportunities and demands of college;



the workplace, and life beyond high school. This is a shared responsibility between the Arizona Department of Education (ADE), the state's LEAs and schools at all points along the education continuum. The state is also committed to holding schools accountable to this goal using a model that will eventually integrate two currently incongruent systems:

Currently, Arizona's schools and districts are assessed under two very different systems; the state's framework for accountability—the *A-F Letter Grade system*—and the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Operating these disparate systems has resulted in conflicting feedback for schools and districts. Further, the looming deadline set by NCLB of proficiency for 100% of students by 2014 has been an increasingly steep hill to climb. As a result, more and more schools and districts in Arizona are becoming identified as needing improvement, which is overloading the state's ability to identify the *truly* struggling schools in Arizona and provide the necessary assistance.

Despite the best intentions of NCLB, in reality, it is likely that the current NCLB system will result in over 1000 of Arizona's Title I schools in some level of school improvement within the next two years. Arizona's Superintendent of Public Instruction, John Huppenthal, has high expectations for the state's schools to provide every opportunity for Arizona students to rise to college and career readiness with ambitious yet attainable goals. Keeping with the state's emphasis on continuous improvement, the system Arizona is proposing will provide schools and districts with a tiered system of state intervention and oversight founded on the A-F Letter Grade a school earns. The state commits to providing support where needed and recognition where warranted.

The state accountability system in Arizona is predicated on a continuous improvement model, with differentiated state supports and interventions designed to drive student achievement toward the goal of college and career readiness. Through the state's A-F Letter Grade system, Arizona makes annual accountability determinations for all schools and districts based on student academic status and growth. The ADE is aligning Arizona's state standards and Arizona's state assessment to the knowledge and skills necessary to be college and career ready, and successful beyond high school. With this ubiquitous focus, the state strove in this application, to design a comprehensive accountability system for schools and districts. The state endeavored to take advantage of the minor differences in prominence of various ways to measure school quality between the state of Arizona and the Federal systems, and is working toward ambitious yet attainable goals that create a positive feedback loop to drive continuous improvement at the student, school, and LEA levels.

The ADE Research and Evaluation division will introduce a Student Growth Target (SGT) system (also described in 2B) during the 2012-2013 school year and work with various stakeholders to integrate into our A-F Letter Grade accountability system and eventually the basis for our annual measurable objectives (AMOs) required to be met by the USED. Launching a new state initiative of the size and scope of the SGT system will take a year to automate the system and gather feedback from the field. While the ADE is working with the stakeholders to successfully implement an SGT system, the ADE submitted AMOs reflective of the traditional measureable objectives to hold our schools accountable to a goal of reaching 100% proficiency by the school year 2019-2020 (described in 2B). These AMOs will keep our schools striving for excellence, preparing them for a smooth transition from a system that has two parallel tracks to one system satisfying both state and federal accountability goals.

The state's ultimate goal for the flexibility request is to carefully merge to one seamless accountability system that puts every student on track to college and career readiness. With Arizona's state accountability system as the foundation, the state can enhance the identification and recognition system and further differentiate interventions. Taken together, these changes will allow us to support every school where students are struggling and create a system focused on college and career readiness that supports continuous improvement.

The timeline for execution of the proposed updates to the Arizona accountability system will start initially in July of 2012 by identifying "Priority" and "Focus" schools for school improvement for the school year 2012-2013 (as described in Section 2D and 2E). The ADE Research and Evaluation division is currently working with Dr. Damian Betebenner to produce Arizona SGTs. As early as the fall of 2012 the ADE will troubleshoot the automation of the state's SGT system, gather feedback from our stakeholders, and work with ADE's Accountability Advisory Group to discuss the best way the new SGT system could be integrated into our A-F Letter Grade accountability system and eventually the basis for our AMOs.

### **HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

The passage of Proposition 301 by Arizona voters in November 2001 was the first step in Arizona holding schools accountable for the academic performance of their students. The ADE developed an accountability system to measure school performance based on student achievement on Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS), mathematics and reading sections. This system was dubbed AZ LEARNS (now referred to as the AZ LEARNS Legacy system) and requires that all public schools in Arizona receive an achievement profile under the state accountability system.

With the passage of NCLB, Arizona became a dual accountability state. Schools were now held accountable to meet the state expectations under AZ LEARNS Legacy and to meet federal requirements under NCLB. Schools' ability to meet the Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) toward the goal of NCLB (academic proficiency for all children by the 2013-2014 academic year) resulted in the Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) determinations. An AYP determination was made for all schools in Arizona but only Title I funded schools faced consequences for their inability to make AYP. Under NCLB, LEAs were also evaluated to determine improvement status.

Over the past decade, the AZ LEARNS system has not been without its critics. Neither AZ LEARNS Legacy nor the NCLB AYP determinations provided meaningful or understandable descriptions of school performance for parents or educators. Primarily, the nomenclature used in the AZ LEARNS labeling system was misleading at worst and confusing at best because school labels and AYP determinations failed to provide parents with an objective metric of their school's performance, did not clearly distinguish between categories, and parents could not compare their school to a neighboring school. Under AZ LEARNS Legacy, the "Performing" label is actually the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest ranking out of 5 (i.e., Excelling, Highly Performing, Performing Plus, Performing, and Underperforming). The result? Over 90% of Arizona's schools receive a "performing" or better label. Further, as the science of school and district accountability progressed, so did the state's understanding of the importance of measuring and holding schools accountable to student growth. In fact, the changes that were made in 2010 reflect a response to educators statewide who have long been asking for a system that would recognize the academic *growth* of students over time rather than the more narrow focus provided by snapshots of achievement at one point in time.

~~The A-F Letter Grade System~~ was passed by the Arizona Legislature in 2010 and adopted in June 2011 by the State Board of Education.<sup>3</sup> ~~Arizona now has a state accountability system that provides an understandable determination of school and district performance. The A-F Letter Grade System was designed to place equal value on current year achievement and the academic growth of all students while placing a laser-like focus on the school's lowest achieving students. The A-F Letter Grade System provides a consistent yardstick from year to year to track a school or LEA's progress over time, providing data to inform instruction and drive academic interventions in a way that the AZ LEARNS-Legacy system simply did not do.~~

~~In his former role as State Senator and sponsor of the A-F Letter Grade legislation, Arizona's Superintendent Huppenthal felt strongly that districts should be recognized for accomplishments in building their schools' capacity to provide high quality instruction to all students. He was also determined to hold LEAs accountable when they failed to demonstrate success, leaving students behind academically. Thus, in its implemented form, the A-F Letter Grade System also acknowledges the responsibility that LEAs have in ensuring the academic success of the students within the schools they oversee; therefore, the A-F Letter Grade System is applied to LEAs as well as to all schools.~~

~~The first phase of the A-F Letter Grade System began in the 2011-2012 school year, when 1,501 public schools received their first letter grade. There are over 400 additional schools slated to receive letter grades in the summer of 2012. These schools are those that required a parallel profile established for alternative, small and K-2 schools. In the spring of 2012, all three parallel models were approved by the State Board of Education. In addition to the A-F Letter Grade for traditional schools, all Arizona schools also received an AZ LEARNS-Legacy profile in 2011. Table 2.1 below reflects the distribution of schools receiving a letter grade and a Legacy profile in 2011.~~

**Table 2.1: Distribution of Schools Receiving AZ LEARNS-Legacy Labels and A-F Letter Traditional Model Grades in the 2010-2011 School Year**

	A	B	C	D	Total
<b>Excelling</b>	<b>69.4%</b> (202)	<b>30.2%</b> (88)	<b>&lt;1%</b> (1)	0	291
<b>Highly Performing</b>	<b>27%</b> (65)	<b>65%</b> (157)	<b>8.6%</b> (21)	0	243
<b>Performing Plus</b>	<b>4.0%</b> (28)	<b>39.3%</b> (278)	<b>50.4%</b> (356)	<b>6.4%</b> (45)	707
<b>Performing</b>	0	<b>5.5%</b> (13)	<b>45.8%</b> (108)	<b>48.7%</b> (115)	236
<b>Underperforming</b>	0	0	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>95.8%</b>	24

<sup>3</sup> Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S. §15-241) requires that the ADE shall determine the criteria for each school and school district classification using a research-based methodology, which is defined as the systematic and objective application of statistical and quantitative research principles to determine a standard measurement of acceptable academic progress for each school and school district.

			(1)	(23)	
<b>Total</b>	295	536	487	183	1,501

Under the state's three accountability systems in the 2011-12 school year, Arizona public schools received up to four different labels: AYP/NCLB Improvement Status and Persistently Lowest-Achieving (Tier I or Tier II); an AZ LEARNS Legacy achievement profile and an A-F Letter Grade. Each label and the two systems are not comparable because each is based on separate criteria, as outlined in Table 2.2, resulting in confusing, mixed signals for educators, parents and the public about their schools. For example, a school could be labeled "Performing" under AZ LEARNS Legacy, but not make AYP, and earn a 'C' grade through the A-F Letter Grade System. The disparate information also reduced the perceived credibility of the information provided to the public.

**Table 2.2: Comparison of the Three Accountability Systems in Operation in Arizona**

	<b>NCLB (Conjunctive model)</b>	<b>AZ LEARNS Legacy (Additive model)</b>	<b>A-F Letter Grade (Additive model)</b>
<b>Authorization</b>	Required by federal law Section 1003	Required by state law Arizona Revised Statutes, 15-241	Required by state law Arizona Revised Statutes, 15-241
<b>Student Performance Measure</b>	One-year snapshot of student performance	Longitudinal examination of student performance	Student Achievement, and Student Growth compared to peers
<b>Data Used in Calculation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percent of Students Proficient on AIMS</li> <li>Percent Students Assessed</li> <li>Attendance/Graduation Rates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percent of Students Proficient on AIMS</li> <li>Measure of Academic Progress (MAP)</li> <li>Graduation/Dropout Rates</li> <li>Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)</li> <li>ELL reclassification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percent of Students Proficient on AIMS</li> <li>Student Growth Percentile</li> <li>Growth of All students and the Bottom 25% for each school</li> <li>Graduation/Dropout Rates</li> <li>ELL reclassification</li> </ul>
<b>Labels</b>	Yes/No System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School Improvement</li> <li>Year 1</li> <li>Year 2</li> <li>Year 3 (Corrective Action)</li> <li>Year 4 (Plan to Restructure)</li> </ul>	Performance Profile <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excelling</li> <li>Highly Performing</li> <li>Performing Plus</li> <li>Performing</li> <li>Underperforming</li> <li>Failing to meet academic standards</li> </ul>	Letter Grade <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A</li> <li>B</li> <li>C</li> <li>D</li> <li>F</li> </ul>

● ~~Year 5 (Implement  
Restructuring Plan)~~

~~It is clear that the current accountability systems are not connected and fail to provide Arizona's parents, educators, or Arizona communities with a consistent message about school quality. Arizona believes strongly that an accountability system should be coherent, provide meaningful measures and reliable results to inform instruction and strengthen schools. The state believes these goals can be met when flexibility is granted by the U.S. Department of Education to unite the state's A-F Letter Grade System with the tenets of the ESEA. In order to expedite the transition to the A-F Letter Grade System and eliminate the requirement to issue labels under the AZ LEARNS Legacy system during the 2012-2013 school year, ADE introduced SB 1458, which was signed by Governor Brewer in April 2012. The bill also specifies the plan for the determination of an "F" letter grade during this transition period.<sup>4</sup> As mentioned above, in the spring of 2012, the Arizona State Board of Education approved the parallel models (i.e., Small Schools model, the Alternative Schools model and K-2 Schools model).~~

~~In order to ensure that all schools are held accountable and receive necessary support under a parallel and/or supplemental system, Arizona will develop a differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system for those schools identified as "Not Rated" in prior years.~~

~~For extremely small schools which do not have sufficient data to receive an A-F letter grade (at least 30 test records pooled over the current year and two prior years) a parallel monitoring system will be piloted in the 2014-2015 school year.~~

~~ADE created a Supplemental Accountability Committee to prepare recommendations for SBE. The committee was composed of ADE's accountability, school improvement, research and evaluation, and policy development units, a representative from the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (ASBCS), and a representative for alternative charter schools. The committee created the Demonstration of Sufficient Education Program (DSEP), using a similar document that the ASBCS uses. The DSEP, renamed Measure of Academic Progress for Schools (MAPS), will monitor an extremely small school's curriculum, instruction, assessment, and teacher quality. Ultimately, the MAPS may evaluate schools which serve untested grades as well. Given their unique characteristics, the MAPS will identify extremely small schools in need of support or interventions. The MAPS will be released for comment to some potentially affected schools in the fall of the 2014-2015 school year followed by necessary revisions.~~

~~In the fall of school year 2014-2015, members from several units within ADE will verify the MAPS' accuracy via site visits and/or other methods of triangulation. During this pilot period, these schools will be classified as Pending or "P". When the pilot is complete, final revisions are made, and stakeholder feedback has been addressed, results will be presented to the SBE for approval of a final process. The same multi-unit team will then determine the final status of each eligible school. Upon final adoption by the SBE, MAPS labels will be made public in the same manner as all other letter grades.~~

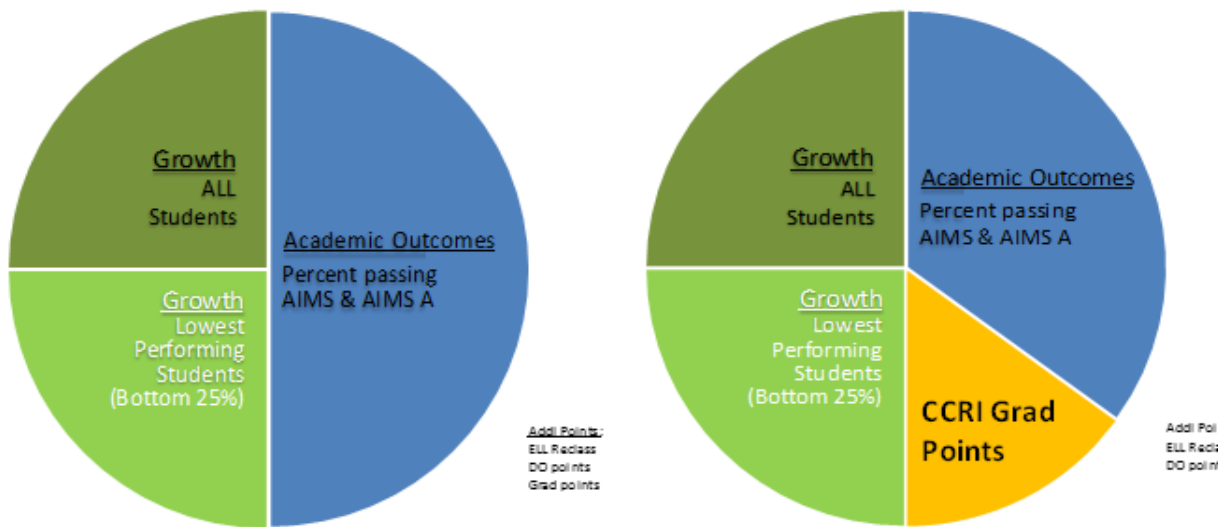
<sup>4</sup> ~~SB 1458 Chaptered Version~~

Other schools classified as “Not Rated” (NR) are online schools, which serve less than 100 FAY students. Many online schools serve dual enrolled students in subjects other than those tested. Consequently, ADE is developing an accountability model specifically for online schools, which places a larger emphasis on accountability for non-FAY students as well as a more appropriate measure for dual-enrolled students. The end-of-year data gathered from all Arizona Online Instruction schools (AOI) on July 17, 2014 will be used with data from prior years to pilot an accountability framework developed in collaboration with AOI stakeholders. The end goal is an A-F label for AOI schools based on their unique student data and instructional services.

### OVERVIEW OF ARIZONA’S A-F LETTER GRADE SYSTEM

The formula used to calculate the A-F Letter Grade is based on a point system that weights academic outcomes and academic growth equally. The schools are held accountable for the students for a full academic year (FAY), which is defined as enrollment within the first 10 days of a school’s calendar year and continuous enrollment up to the first day of state-mandated AIMS testing. There are 200 points possible—100 for academic outcomes and 100 for academic growth. A profile is developed for each LEA and school and a letter grade is then assigned based on the number of points received.

**Figure 2.1: Components of the New Profile**



### Achievement Composite (100 possible points):

The achievement component of the A-F Letter Grade System holds schools accountable for achievement in the current year based on student proficiency on AIMS assessments. Proficiency is determined by calculating the percentage of students proficient on the state standards in a given grade in reading and mathematics, determined as scoring “meets” or “exceeds” on the grade-level AIMS assessment. The percentage of students proficient in each subject is averaged for a school-wide average. This average is multiplied by 100 and converted to a point value between 0 and 100.

The achievement composite also includes measures of academic achievement in addition to the AIMS

test. The additional components of the composite score accounts for the percentage of English Language Learners (ELLs) who are reclassified as fully English proficient on the Arizona English Language Learner Assessment<sup>5</sup> (AZELLA) during the academic year. If a school meets the criteria and reclassifies 23% or more students as proficient in English, they receive 3 points. In Arizona, every student is tested on the AIMS in the spring, including ELL students. Therefore, ELL students are included in the percent passing AIMS calculation and are also included in the Growth portion of the A-F Letter Grade model described below.

Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who take the alternate assessment (AIMS A) will also be included in the composite portion of the A-F Letter Grade models starting in the 2011-2012 school year. Students participating in AIMS A, who have demonstrated proficiency (i.e., *meets or exceeds*) in the current year, will be accounted for in the percent passing calculation. As illustrated in the formula below, the school-wide percent passing is calculated by adding the number of students proficient on AIMS with the number of students proficient on AIMS A and dividing that sum by the total number of students tested. To stay consistent with federal guidelines that require a 1 percent cap at the LEA and state level on the number of AIMS A scores counted toward proficiency, LEAs will have this additional rule regarding the percentage of AIMS A students included in the LEA A-F Letter Grade:

Arizona will incorporate the same process used under IDEA to identify any LEA who exceeds the 1.0 percent cap into the state's A-F Letter Grade System. LEAs will be notified if they have exceeded the 1.0 percent cap and which proficient scores will count as non-proficient at schools in the LEA. This determination is based on the additional data collected regarding the eligibility determination process for student(s) assessed with AIMS A (IEP and MET). ADE will assist any LEA who meets the criteria in 34 CFR Sect 200.13(c)(5)(1) (i.e., small LEA, LEA with special schools) in filing an appeal for an exception to the 1.0 percent cap:

$$\frac{\text{\# students proficient on AIMS} + \text{\# students proficient on AIMS A}}{\text{\# number of AIMS \& AIMS A students enrolled at time of testing}}$$

High schools are also held accountable for meeting stringent criteria for graduation and dropout rates. In April 2013, the Arizona State Board of Education added a college and career readiness index (CCRI) to the A-F Letter Grade accountability model for traditional high schools. The State Board approved index will be weighted at 25% of the model and introduces a multiple measure component to the Arizona accountability system that is not reliant solely on the state assessment. The full CCRI consist of a weight of 15% for graduation rate (i.e., 4- and 5- years, with additional points for a benchmark reached for 6-, and 7-year); 5% for participation in college and career readiness classes or examinations; and 5% for success in college and career readiness classes, examinations, and

<sup>5</sup> Arizona identifies ELL students by use of the Home Language Survey also known as the Primary Home Language Other Than English (PHLOTE). Once a response on the PHLOTE identifies a student's home language as any other than English, the student is then administered the AZELLA. If the student scores below proficient on the AZELLA, the student is classified as an ELL. ELL students are tested on the AZELLA the first time the student enrolls and completes the PHLOTE and every spring until the student is identified as English proficient and monitored by taking the AZELLA during the spring administration for two years after testing "proficient".



professional certification (see table below). This index incentivizes schools to offer courses that will prepare students for success beyond high school. As the ADE's data system matures over FY13 and FY14 the CCRI indicators will be clearly defined and will be applicable to all Arizona high schools:

Weight	Item and Points
10%	Annual 4-year grad rate (20 pts.)
5%	Annual 5-year grad rate (10 pts.)
	6-year grad rate (2 pts.) and 7-year grad rate (1 pt.)*
	<i>Cap of 30 points (15%) permitted for graduation rate</i>
5%	College and Career course participation (10 pts.)
5%	College and Career course success (10 pts.)

ADE continues to collaborate with stakeholders and develop data capacity to fully implement the CCRI Participation and Success indicators. At their May 2014 Board meeting, the SBE voted to include the CCRI graduation rate component of 15% in FY14, while preserving the existing point scale. The scaling decision was for the 2013-2014 letter grades only, as the SBE stated its intention to revisit the A-F accountability system as the new statewide assessment is implemented, including incorporation of the remaining elements of the CCRI and adoption of new scale scores. The ADE staff will also submit impact data to the USED for review. This will address the condition on Arizona's Flexibility Request as specified in the November 2013 letter to be effective for the 2013-14 school year, understanding that the final adoption of policy is a duty constitutionally and statutorily vested with the State Board of Education.

The State Board of Education adopted the more comprehensive CCRI graduation component because of its inclusion of all cohorts—particularly those six and seven year graduates. These delayed graduates tended to be disproportionately from ethnic groups and/or receiving special education services. Hispanic students comprised 46 and 48% of 5- and 6-year graduates respectively. With the largest Native American reservation in our state, Native American students had the lowest 4-year graduation rate though they were the highest subgroup to graduate within five years. Of all 7-year graduates, 59% were students participating in special education.

At 15% of the high school letter grade, the A-F total points increased an average of 5 points:

**Table 2.3: Graduation Rates Within Arizona's A-F Letter Grade Accountability System**

Graduation rates within Arizona's A-F Letter Grade Accountability System*							
By Letter Grade; 15% as approved by SBE		4-year Grad rate	5-year Grad rate	6-year Grad rate	7-year Grad rate	Percent passing	Growth points
A	Mean	91.66	93.26	93.48	92.14	81.94	60.55
	Median	92.74	95.34	95.62	94.67	82.00	60.00
	N	96	96	96	96	96	96
	Std. Deviation	6.533	6.909	6.749	7.940	9.750	7.804
	Std. Error of Mean	.667	.705	.689	.810	.995	.796
	Maximum	100	100	100	100	100	85
	Minimum	64	50	68	62	56	43
	Skewness	-1.624	-3.204	-2.039	-1.727	-.245	.426
	% of Total Sum	37.4%	36.9%	36.5%	36.4%	40.5%	39.2%

B	Mean	83.86	85.53	86.16	84.83	67.97	50.69
	Median	85.37	88.57	88.58	88.74	68.00	50.50
	N	104	104	104	104	104	104
	Std. Deviation	9.324	14.209	10.942	12.940	7.690	5.657
	Std. Error of Mean	.914	1.393	1.073	1.269	.754	.555
	Maximum	100	100	100	100	88	73
	Minimum	50	14	38	32	48	39
	Skewness	-1.264	-3.205	-2.324	-2.176	-.094	.862
	% of Total Sum	37.1%	36.7%	36.4%	36.3%	36.4%	35.6%
C	Mean	71.89	78.04	80.23	79.79	55.89	44.63
	Median	75.50	80.35	84.15	82.76	54.50	45.00
	N	64	64	64	64	64	64
	Std. Deviation	14.988	14.083	14.846	12.508	7.870	6.318
	Std. Error of Mean	1.874	1.760	1.856	1.563	.984	.790
	Maximum	95	100	100	100	73	62
	Minimum	17	28	8	42	31	31
	Skewness	-1.609	-1.631	-2.473	-1.010	-.059	-.057
	% of Total Sum	19.6%	20.6%	20.9%	21.0%	18.4%	19.3%
D	Mean	58.81	59.21	63.83	63.73	37.00	36.25
	Median	62.50	65.21	70.62	72.08	39.00	37.50
	N	24	24	24	24	24	24
	Std. Deviation	19.392	23.660	22.136	25.180	13.221	6.771
	Std. Error of Mean	3.958	4.830	4.518	5.140	2.699	1.382
	Maximum	87	100	89	100	66	51
	Minimum	4	7	4	11	10	22
	Skewness	-1.104	-.471	-1.208	-.657	-.079	-.165
	% of Total Sum	6.0%	5.9%	6.2%	6.3%	4.6%	5.9%
Total	Mean	81.71	84.25	85.42	84.39	67.35	51.43
	Median	85.66	89.07	88.76	88.89	68.00	51.00
	N	288	288	288	288	288	288
	Std. Deviation	14.998	16.293	14.582	15.055	16.050	10.085
	Std. Error of Mean	.884	.960	.859	.887	.946	.594
	Maximum	100	100	100	100	100	85
	Minimum	4	7	4	11	10	22
	Skewness	-1.821	-2.236	-2.434	-2.004	-.506	-.188
	% of Total Sum	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Graduation rates within Arizona's A-F Letter Grade Accountability System*							
By letter grade at 20% (15% 4-year, 5% 5-year plus 6 & 7 year for 3 points)		4-year Grad-rate	5-year Grad-rate	6-year Grad-rate	7-year Grad-rate	Percent passing	Growth points
A	Mean	91.87	93.20	93.62	91.70	81.47	60.26
	Median	92.74	95.31	95.57	94.15	81.50	60.00
	N	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Std. Deviation	6.029	6.891	6.302	8.417	9.784	7.792
	Std. Error of Mean	.603	.689	.630	.842	.978	.779
	Maximum	100	100	100	100	100	85
	Minimum	64	50	68	62	56	43

	Skewness	-1.362	-3.088	-2.052	-1.634	-.161	.482
	% of Total Sum	39.0%	38.4%	38.1%	37.7%	42.0%	40.7%
B	Mean	83.35	85.37	85.76	85.11	67.43	50.33
	Median	84.84	88.25	88.06	88.68	68.00	50.00
	N	105	105	105	105	105	105
	Std. Deviation	9.289	14.071	10.894	12.663	7.896	6.757
	Std. Error of Mean	.907	1.373	1.063	1.236	.774	.562
	Maximum	98	100	100	100	88	73
	Minimum	50	14	38	32	48	39
	Skewness	-1.226	-3.247	-2.260	-2.338	.046	-.907
	% of Total Sum	37.2%	36.9%	36.6%	36.8%	36.5%	35.7%
C	Mean	71.01	77.22	79.73	79.01	55.57	44.42
	Median	74.26	80.00	83.24	81.10	54.00	45.50
	N	60	60	60	60	60	60
	Std. Deviation	15.017	14.237	15.199	12.707	8.041	6.565
	Std. Error of Mean	1.939	1.838	1.962	1.640	1.038	.847
	Maximum	95	100	100	100	73	62
	Minimum	17	28	8	42	34	31
	Skewness	-1.694	-1.548	-2.374	-.866	-.050	-.074
	% of Total Sum	18.1%	19.1%	19.4%	19.5%	17.2%	18.0%
D	Mean	58.04	58.55	63.07	63.32	36.35	36.30
	Median	61.54	61.84	69.81	70.98	37.00	38.00
	N	23	23	23	23	23	23
	Std. Deviation	19.442	23.968	22.313	25.663	13.117	6.918
	Std. Error of Mean	4.054	4.998	4.653	5.351	2.735	1.442
	Maximum	87	100	89	100	66	51
	Minimum	4	7	4	11	10	22
	Skewness	-1.057	-.398	-1.151	-.601	-.004	-.188
	% of Total Sum	5.7%	5.6%	5.9%	6.0%	4.3%	5.6%
Total	Mean	81.71	84.25	85.42	84.39	67.35	51.43
	Median	85.66	89.07	88.76	88.89	68.00	51.00
	N	288	288	288	288	288	288
	Std. Deviation	14.998	16.293	14.582	15.055	16.050	10.085
	Std. Error of Mean	.884	.960	.859	.887	.946	.594
	Maximum	100	100	100	100	100	85
	Minimum	4	7	4	11	10	22
	Skewness	-1.821	-2.236	-2.434	-2.004	-.506	-.188
	% of Total Sum	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

High schools will also receive 3 points for a decrease in their dropout rates by meeting one of the following criteria:

- 1) Have a dropout rate that is less than or equal to 6% for a 3-year average; or,
- 2) Have a 1% decrease in dropout rate if the current year rate is less than or equal to 9%; or,
- 3) Have a 2% decrease in dropout rate if the current year rate is greater than 9%.

Demonstrating Arizona's commitment to college- and career-readiness, graduation rate requirements are embedded in each element of Reward, Priority, and Focus School identification for Title I schools

(see sections 2.C., 2.D., and 2.E.).

### **Growth (100 possible points):**

The purpose of the growth component is to acknowledge the academic growth of students within a school or district, even if a student has not yet reached grade-level proficiency. Arizona uses a student-level growth measure—Student Growth Percentiles (SGP)—that describes each student’s academic gains relative to other students who begin at the same starting point. Including a longitudinal student growth component into an accountability system is particularly important because it recognizes the degree to which the lowest achieving students strive to “gain ground” academically from one year to the next.

Conceptually, a student growth percentile represents the amount of academic growth for an individual student compared to other students in the same grade who share the same AIMS scale scores. This establishes a student’s peer group that takes into account test performance in reading and mathematics in the five most recent years in order to establish more precise peer groups. An individual’s growth is then compared to his or her peers who scored the same or similar in subsequent years. The growth percentile represents how much growth an individual student has made relative to academic peers so that only academic achievement is compared from one year to the next. Every student attending the state’s public schools (e.g., ELL, students with disabilities, etc.) who takes the AIMS is included in the SGP calculation.

For accountability in the state’s A-F Letter Grade System, the SGPs of students in a school are aggregated to the school level and likewise to the district level. First, the state calculated the median growth for all students within a school, which is understood as the growth of the average middle student within a school compared to the middle student in other schools statewide. ADE also calculates the median SGP for the students who were academically among the bottom 25% of their grade-level in the previous year. Using this metric, schools and LEAs are held responsible for the growth of the students starting the school year at the bottom of their class. ADE then averages these two medians to calculate the school-wide or district-wide total growth score. To do this, the average of the two medians is simply converted into a point value by multiplying it by 100. Because the SGP metric is a percentile between 1 and 99, we bound the bottom of our scale at 1 point and add this point to the average growth score so the total points possible in the growth portion equal 100 points.

### **Identifying the Bottom Quartile Students:**

Calculating the bottom quartile of students is based upon achievement on the reading and mathematics sections of the AIMS test from the prior year. Student growth percentiles are not used to identify the bottom quartile, but rather, once the bottom quartile of students is identified, the median growth percentile for this group is calculated for a school or district for use in their letter grade formula. This group of students will include the disaggregated subgroups under the current NCLB requirements.

For all students in grades 3<sup>6</sup>–8 and 10, the first step is to calculate the difference between each student's prior year<sup>7</sup> AIMS scale score and prior year *grade level* AIMS passing cut score (cut score for *Meets*) in mathematics and reading separately:

$$\text{Difference} = (\text{Prior Year Scale Score} - \text{Prior Year Grade Level "Pass" Cut Score})$$

Next, a mathematical transformation is used to remove negative numbers and account for the different passing scores in each grade, so that all students could be compared in a school, regardless of grade level. This transformation does not alter the essence of the data because each data point receives the same treatment and are reversible when the data need to be brought back to their original structure.

In this transformation, each student's *Difference* score is weighted by the prior year AIMS "performance level". There are four performance levels for each grade, with vertically sealed cut scores. In this analysis, a numeric value between 1 and 4 is assigned to the grade-appropriate performance level, as follows:

- 1 = Falls Far Below
- 2 = Approaches
- 3 = Meets
- 4 = Exceeds

Finally, the numeric performance level is multiplied by 1,000, which adjusts for negative values from the *Difference* score but keeps the students in the same ordinal ranking. This step is calculated separately for high schools:

$$\text{Adjusted Difference} = (\text{Difference} + [\text{AIMS performance level} \times 1,000])$$

For each school, across all grades served, students' *Adjusted Difference* scores are rank ordered from low to high by subject and separated into quartiles. The lowest quartile of students in reading and mathematics represent a school's lowest performing students – the bottom 25%. The growth percentiles of each student in this group are then used to determine the median growth score in reading and mathematics within each school.

### Total Score

The total score is calculated by adding a school's composite score and its overall growth score together for a possible total of between 0 and 200 points and compared to a grade classification scale, illustrated in Table 2.3 below, to determine the final A-F Letter Grade. Table 2.3 shows the range of points for each A-F Letter Grade level, and a description of each A-F Letter Grade as described in A.R.S. §15-241. Under the state statute, a letter grade of 'F' is designated if a school or district receives a letter grade of 'D' for three consecutive years. HB 2663 (underperforming school districts: reclassification), requested by the State Board of Education and recently signed by Governor Brewer,

<sup>6</sup> The AIMS test is not administered in grade 2, but the Stanford 10 Norm-Referenced test is administered to students in Arizona in grade 2. To determine the bottom 25% for grade 3, Stanford 10 total reading and total mathematics scale scores are rank ordered from low to high and separated into quartiles. The median SGPs are determined in the same manner as stated above.

<sup>7</sup> The AIMS test is not administered in grade 9; thus, for grade 10 students, their grade 9 Stanford 10 scores are used as the "prior year" data in the same manner described above to find the bottom quartile.

enables the State Board of Education to expedite the process of determining that a “D” school should become an “F” school if the Board determines that the school is not reasonably likely to achieve an average level of performance.<sup>8</sup>

**Table 2.3: A-F Letter Grade Total Scores and Description**

Rating	Total Score	Description
A	140-200	LEA/school demonstrates an <b>excellent</b> level of performance
B	120-139	LEA/school demonstrates an <b>above average</b> level of performance
C	100-119	LEA/school demonstrates an <b>average</b> level of performance
D	0-99	LEA/school demonstrates a <b>below average</b> level of performance
F		Those schools earning a “D” for three consecutive years

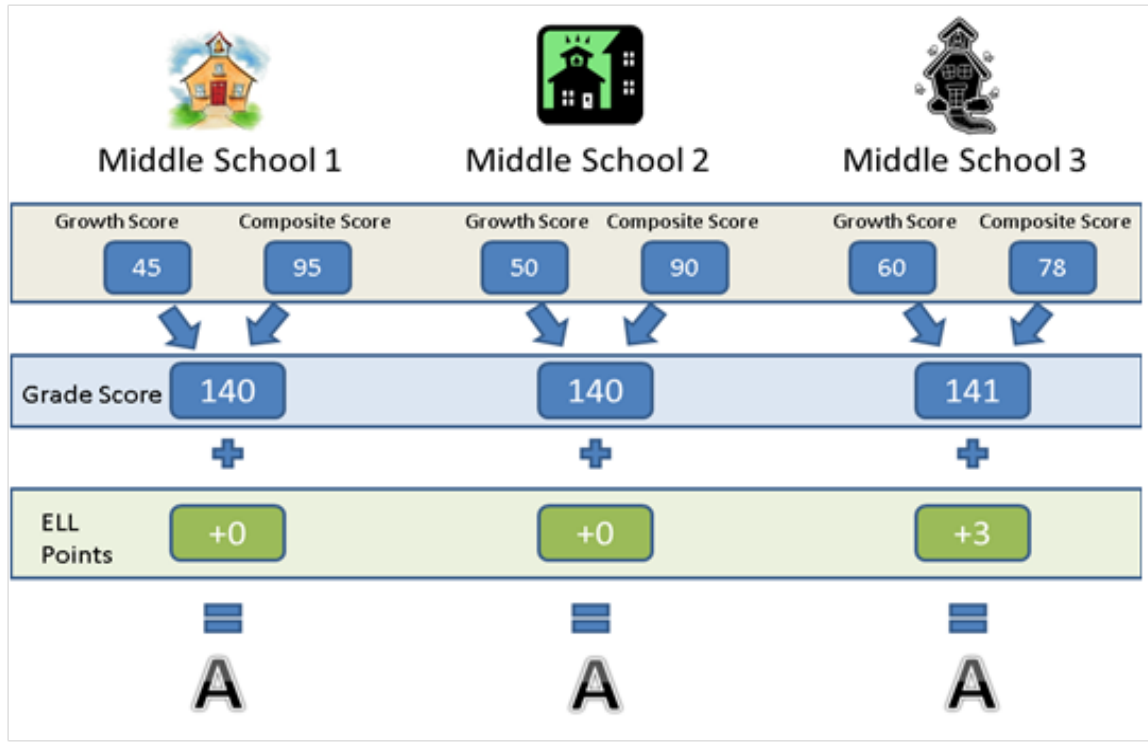
The letter grade scale and the thresholds used to determine a school’s final letter grade were derived through a rigorous, iterative process in collaboration with the ADE’s Technical Advisory Committee and guidance from the State Board of Education’s AZ-LEARNs subcommittee. Final determination of the A-F Letter Grade scale was determined by the State Board of Education.

For the composite portion of the model, ‘average’ was defined as 50% of students passing AIMS in the current year. For the growth portion of the model, ‘average’ was determined to be a median growth percentile of 50. Thus, a ‘C’ school with 50 percent of students passing AIMS and average growth equal to a median percentile of 50 would equal 100 total A-F points. To determine the grade thresholds, half of the total points possible (100 out of 200 possible) was established as the lowest threshold for a ‘C’ school. Equal increments of ten percent of total points possible (i.e., 20 points) was added to the average percent passing for ‘C’ schools ( $50 + 20 = 70$  composite points) and added to the 50 points in the growth portion for a threshold of 120 for ‘B’ schools. The same methodology was applied to determine the lowest threshold for an ‘A’ school, which is equal to 140 points (see Table 2.3a). State statute (A.R.S §15-241) contains language provided in Table 2.3 above to describe school labels.

**Table 2.3a: Calculation for Determining A-F Letter Grade Thresholds**

Grade	'Average' Percent Passing	-	'Average' Growth	-	Cut score
D	< 50	+	50	=	99
C	50	+	50	=	100
B	$50 + 20 = 70$	+	50	=	120
A	$70 + 20 = 90$	+	50	=	140

<sup>8</sup> HB 2663 Chaptered Version

**Figure 2.2: Three scenarios of schools achieving an “A” Letter Grade****Assessment Participation Rates**

The Arizona Department of Education believes strongly that schools should administer the AIMS to all students as mandated in state statute (A.R.S. §15-241 & 15-755) because we believe that this compliance is essential to a robust accountability system. The A-F Letter Grade System holds all schools accountable to testing at least 95% of their students on AIMS and AIMS A in the current year. Table 2.4 below illustrates how schools are held accountable to the percentage of students tested.

**Table 2.4: Maximum Allowable Points and Letter Grades based on Percent of Students Tested**

Percentage of Students Tested (AIMS & AIMS A)	Maximum Letter Grade Allowed	Eligible Points
95% or more	A	200
85-94%	B	139
75-84%	C	119
Less than 75%	D	99

If a school tests greater than 95% of their students, they are eligible to earn up to an ‘A’ letter grade. However, the highest letter grade a school can earn is limited if the percentage of students tested is less than 95%. For example, schools that test between 85% and 94% of its students are only eligible to receive up to a letter grade of ‘B’. Schools testing fewer than 75% of its students are only eligible to receive up to a ‘D’ letter grade. It is also possible for an ‘A’ school to earn a ‘D’, if the school tests fewer than 75% of its students. This consequence is intentional because schools that fail to account



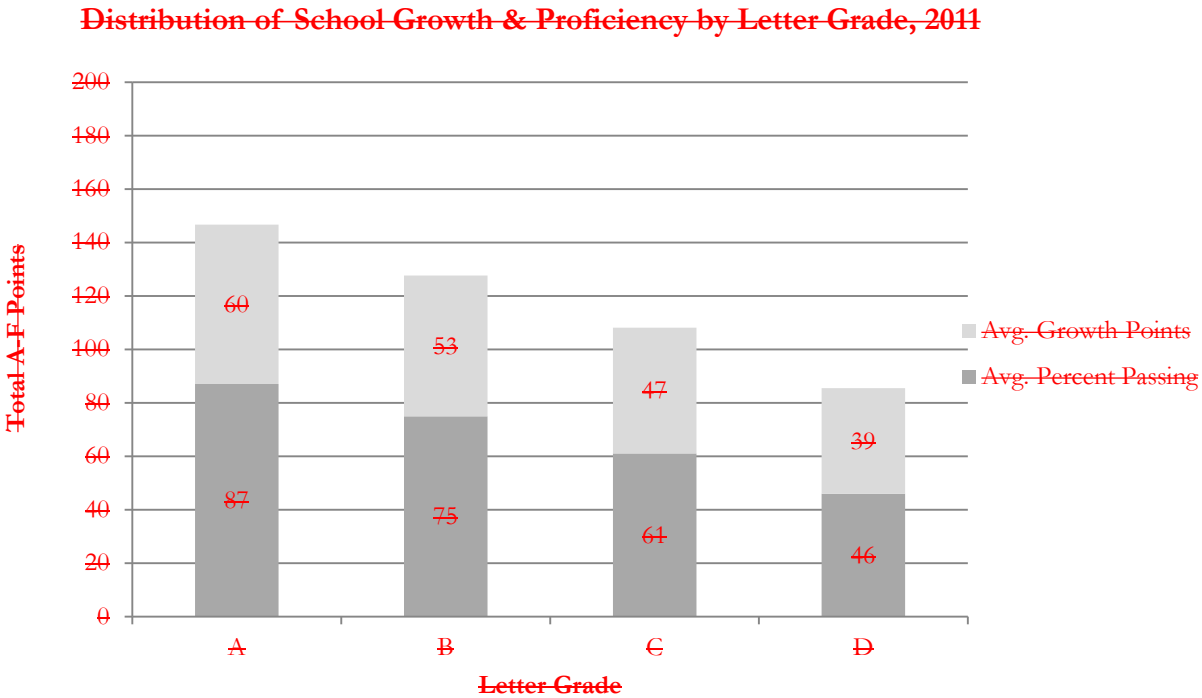
~~for all students during testing are excluding substantial proportions of their students from state-mandated testing which limits their ability to gauge school and student achievement.~~

~~In an effort to reinforce the policy that schools and LEAs are required to test at least 95% of their student population, starting school year 2012-2013 a criterion will be added to the final determinations of AMO that if a school is out of compliance the school and LEA will be designated as “Not Met” for AMOs.~~

~~Beginning with results from the 2011-2012 school year, audits will be conducted according to ADE audit protocols for all Title I schools that do not test 95% of their students. Furthermore, LEAs with Title I schools that fail to meet the 95% testing threshold will be required to amend their Continuous Improvement Plan to include specific strategies and action steps for each school to address the deficiency. In the 2012-2013 school year, schools that do not meet the 95% tested criteria for all students will automatically be designated as “Not Met” on their AMOs, along with their LEA.~~

~~The A-F Letter Grade accountability system is designed to emphasize growth and proficiency equally and the system reflects this balance in the distribution of school letter grades. In theory, a school passing 90 percent of its students with an average median growth of 30, for example, *could* earn the school a total of 120 points and a letter grade of ‘B’. However, this example is a theoretical problem rather than a practical one.~~

~~The figure 2.2a below provides evidence that the A-F Letter Grade system does not permit schools with low growth or low proficiency to receive an A or B letter grade. The data, based upon 2011 letter grades, illustrates that overall growth and proficiency are proportional so that schools with high proficiency rates are also demonstrating more growth than schools with lower letter grades. Conversely, schools with low growth or proficiency do not earn higher letter grades.~~

**Figure 2.2a**

## OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED “STUDENT GROWTH TARGETS”

The ESEA Flexibility Request offers Arizona an excellent opportunity to begin to meld the state and federal accountability systems and to use them in concert. Arizona has already begun efforts in this direction. Last year, Arizona passed legislation allowing the State Board of Education to assign a letter grade of “F” to schools that are identified as Persistently Low Achieving<sup>9</sup>:

With the state’s sights always set on career- and college-readiness, Arizona strove to design annual objectives for schools that are ambitious while being attainable. AMOs set on this premise will create a positive feedback loop to drive continuous improvement at the student, school, and district levels. We propose a Student Growth Target to chart each student’s path to proficiency by identifying the necessary growth percentile a student needs to reach in order for each student to get on- or stay on-track toward proficiency.

To determine each student’s Student Growth Targets, the state begins with their current grade-level performance. Using this as the starting point, we can then project the growth each student would need in order to maintain or attain proficiency on AIMS within 3 years or grade 10, whichever comes first. These student growth targets are criterion-based because individual growth is relative to state performance standards by measuring academic growth toward proficiency against state standards.

<sup>9</sup> HB 2234 – PLA schools

Beginning with the 2012-2013 school year<sup>40</sup>, SGTs will be computed each year for all students and a student's actual SGP would be compared to their individual targets—this is done separately for reading and mathematics.

Schools and teachers need to know the amount of growth necessary for each of their students to reach proficiency. Student Growth Targets data can help LEAs and school administrators guide appropriate instructional interventions and supports based on site-specific needs. In addition, teachers can use Student Growth Targets information to differentiate instruction for individual students and use this information at the classroom level. In particular, teachers need to know what level of growth is required for students to reach proficiency within 3 years in order to plan instruction accordingly.

Likewise, schools and teachers in high performing schools benefit from this information by knowing what is required to maintain proficiency and to encourage their students to reach for excellence. This prevents a "slump" in test scores following attainment of proficiency, and allows for intervention with students who have declined since meeting proficiency to move them further above the cut score.

### **DIFFERENTIATION SYSTEM**

Using the A-F Letter Grade System as the foundation, Arizona is working toward an integrated accountability system that will determine the differentiated performance ratings for schools and LEAs, allowing us to utilize the state and federal accountability systems in concert. The state can provide intensive supports where performance and growth are not at acceptable levels and will recognize and incentivize growth to excellence for students and schools.

#### **Reward Schools**

In order to maintain coherence between the state and the Federal accountability systems, the ADE proposes using Arizona's A-F Letter Grade System and its components as the foundation to identify the highest performing schools and those making the most progress as "Reward Schools". Once the 2011-2012 A-F Letter Grades are released in July 2012, the state proposes identifying and highlighting as the high performance Reward Schools the Title I schools that meet the following criteria:

#### **High Performing Reward-**

- Met AMOs
- Title I school with '**A'** letter grade, and
- Above average SGP among Bottom Quartile students, and not have significantly low performance on AIMS among Bottom Quartile students, and
- Title I high schools with current year graduation rate greater than 80%

#### **High Progress Reward-**

- Title I school with among the highest A-F Growth Points, and
- Above average SGP among Bottom Quartile students, and not have significantly low performance on AIMS among Bottom Quartile students, and
- Title I high schools with growth in graduation rate of greater than 10% over the past 3 years

<sup>40</sup> The ADE will start to run pilot growth targets for students in August 2012 to work out the technicalities that are involved in automating the system for the schools.

**Priority Schools**

Consistent with Reward Schools, the Arizona A-F Letter Grade system is the foundation used to identify Priority Schools, but the complete selection criteria align with the flexibility definitions: Persistently Lowest Achieving schools and those receiving funds through the School Improvement Grant will continue to be monitored and supported as Priority schools. In addition, Arizona will narrowly target intervention and support to the state's lowest performing schools, using two criteria based on the A-F Letter Grade: the 'F' schools and those with among the lowest total points in the A-F Letter Grade System. A school receives an 'F' letter grade by showing a history of low performance, but might not have the lowest total points in the current year. So, by including the schools with the lowest total points, we capture the schools with a history of poor performance and also those with the worst performance in the current year. Finally, Arizona will also include Title I eligible high schools with a history of very low graduation rates.

For schools accountable under the Alternative Schools Model, those among the bottom 10% on total points in the A-F Letter Grade Alternative Model will be identified as Priority Schools. Thus, the eight Title I schools with the lowest total points among the Alternative schools will be included as Priority Schools. However, Title I eligible high schools accountable under the A-F Letter Grade Alternative Model will not be included in the criteria of low graduation rate Priority Schools.

The criteria for identifying Priority Schools are summarized below:

Among the lowest performing schools

- ~~Title I 'F' school, or~~
- ~~The remaining 'D' schools with the lowest A-F total points, or~~
- ~~The lowest 10% of Title I alternative schools on total points in the A-F Letter Grade Alternative Model~~

SIG schools

- ~~Currently served Tier I or Tier II SIG school~~

Low graduation rate

- ~~Title I eligible high schools with graduation rate of less than 60% for 3 consecutive years, not including alternative schools~~

**Focus Schools**

The method for identifying Focus Schools continues logically from the methodology for identifying Reward and Priority Schools. Title I high schools with graduation rates less than 60% for 3 consecutive years are included, regardless of letter grade, excluding alternative schools. As such, all schools with graduation rates of less than 60% are identified as either Priority or Focus Schools. The remaining Focus Schools are those with the largest achievement gaps, both 1) schools with a low achieving subgroup not making significant progress, and 2) schools with the largest gaps between the percent of students passing AIMS among the bottom quartile and top 50% of students. Arizona defined the low achieving subgroup as the students identified as the bottom quartile in the A-F Letter Grade calculations. For alternative schools, the low achieving subgroup was defined as those students not proficient on AIMS in mathematics or in reading. The criteria for Focus Schools is summarized below:

#### ~~Within-school gap~~

- ~~• Title I schools with the highest within-school gap and lowest progress in the percent of bottom quartile students passing AIMS in mathematics and reading from 2010 to 2011~~

#### ~~Low achieving subgroup~~

- ~~• Title I schools with among the lowest percent of bottom quartile students passing AIMS mathematics and reading and among the lowest increase from 2010 to 2011 in percent of bottom quartile students passing AIMS in mathematics and reading~~
- ~~• Title I alternative schools with among the lowest rate of non-proficient students improving by at least one proficiency level on AIMS.~~

#### ~~Low graduation rate~~

- ~~• Title I school with a graduation rate of less than 60% for 3 consecutive years, not including alternative schools that meet Arizona’s original School Improvement Grant Exception policy.~~

### **~~How does the Bottom Quartile relate to ESEA Subgroups?~~**

~~The bottom quartile of students is defined for each school and district as students among the bottom quartile of performance on the reading and mathematics sections of the AIMS test in the prior year. For example, 2010 AIMS scores are used to identify the bottom quartile of a school’s students for the 2011 calculation. This group is identified each academic year based on prior year performance. This information is critical for teachers to have when students start the school year, so that they can target academic interventions to bring those students back on track to college and career readiness.~~

~~The focus on accountability for traditional ESEA subgroups is predicated on a false premise that a student who is a member of a traditionally lower performing subgroup must be low performing, simply by being a member of the subgroup. Using a bottom quartile does not focus on the performance of subgroups because these traditional subgroups are not the focus of Arizona’s efforts. Rather, ALL students who are struggling will receive the attention and focus they need, regardless of subgroup membership.~~

~~Indeed, focusing on traditional subgroups potentially takes attention away from those who really need it — the struggling students. Interventions should be targeted to individual student needs and be formulated based on the student’s status, not the traditional status of their subgroup. If schools focused their attention on serving students in these subgroup populations, that could be to the detriment of struggling students who were not in “historically” low performing subgroups.~~

~~However, the data from 2011 does illustrate that the students who struggle academically in Arizona are disproportionately minority, low income, English Language Learners, and special education students. Arizona’s bottom quartile is comprised of a high percentage of the students in these traditional NCLB subgroups, and a focus on this single combined subgroup will promote clarity and increase the proportion of schools held accountable for subgroup performance.~~

~~In data from the 2010-2011 school year, the state found that within the ESEA subgroups of ELLs and special education, students were predominantly in the bottom quartile (see Table 2.5). Over two-thirds the SPED students were in the bottom quartile in their school in reading and in mathematics. For ELL students, the proportion in the bottom quartile was greater in reading than in mathematics, but even in mathematics, over half of the ELL students were in the bottom quartile. The distribution for~~

students who qualified for Free or Reduced Lunch was also greater in the bottom quartile.

**Table 2.5: Percentage of Students by Subgroups in Each Quartile, for Reading and Mathematics**

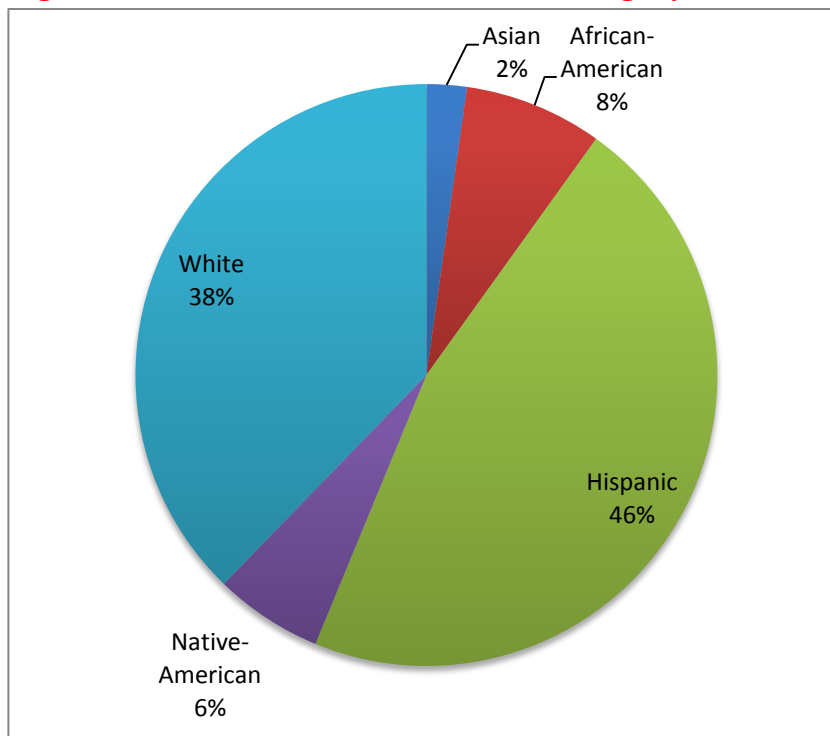
Quartile	Reading			Mathematics		
	ELL	FRL	SPED	ELL	FRL	SPED
1	67%	29%	69%	57%	29%	65%
2	23%	26%	17%	27%	26%	19%
3	8%	24%	9%	12%	24%	10%
4	2%	21%	5%	5%	21%	6%

The distribution among the race/ethnicity groups was not uniform (see Table 2.6). The lower the quartile, the higher the proportion of minority groups, with the exception of Asian students. As an example for Reading shown in Figures 2.3 and 2.4, the bottom quartile has more African-American, Hispanic, and Native American students, relative to the remainder of quartiles.

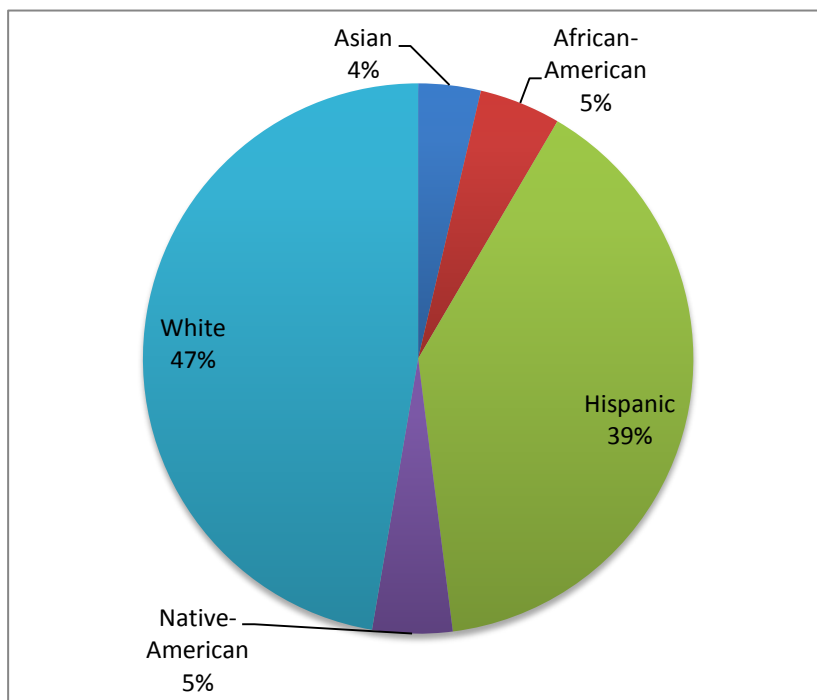
**Table 2.6: Percentage of Students by Race/Ethnicity in Each Quartile for Reading and Mathematics**

Quartile		Asian	African-American	Hispanic	Native American	White
Reading	Q1	20%	31%	28%	30%	21%
	Q2	22%	26%	27%	27%	24%
	Q3	26%	23%	24%	24%	26%
	Q4	32%	19%	21%	20%	20%
Mathematics	Q1	17%	35%	28%	30%	21%
	Q2	20%	27%	26%	27%	24%
	Q3	25%	22%	24%	24%	26%
	Q4	38%	17%	21%	20%	20%

**Figure 2.3: Bottom Quartile for AIMS Reading, by Ethnic Group**



**Figure 2.4: Quartiles 2-4 for AIMS Reading, by Ethnic Group**



To further illustrate the academic struggles among the bottom quartile across all grades, only 20% of



the students in the bottom 25% were proficient in the 2011 AIMS Mathematics assessment and 37% were proficient in AIMS Reading compared to three-quarters of all other students who were proficient in the same content areas. Additionally, in mathematics 77% of the students who were in the “Falls Far Below” category in 2010 (the lowest performance level) on AIMS remained in that category in 2011. For reading, 46% of the students who were in the “Falls Far Below” category in 2010 on AIMS remained in the same category in 2011 and over 50% of students staying in the “Approaches” category in both 2010 and 2011. As stated previously, the bottom quartile represents the lowest performing students within a school based on prior year test scores. Thus, ADE asserts that the state’s bottom quartile is representative of the student subgroups that need the most academic attention and the state’s proposal intends to serve them well.

The ADE is committed to providing support, instructional resources, and a cooperative strategy to help these struggling schools turn the corner. With appropriate interventions and support, the state believes these schools have an opportunity to increase the academic success of their students toward the goal of becoming career- and college-ready.

Keeping with the state's emphasis on continuous improvement, schools and LEAs will receive varying degrees of state intervention and oversight depending on their performance rating. We commit to providing support where needed and recognition where warranted. The state’s school improvement approach will provide Arizona’s top schools with autonomy to further advance student achievement through innovation and methods of proven success in their communities.

ADE’s School Improvement and Intervention Section will oversee the continued implementation of targeted intervention for a minimum of three years for those schools identified as a Priority School or a Focus School.

It should be noted that the lists provided with this application were created to demonstrate the methodology that will be used to make final determinations when the 2012 data are available. The final lists used to determine the first year of Reward, Priority and Focus Schools will use the most current data *at that time* (e.g., 2012-2013 identifications would be based on 2011-2012 Letter Grades). Because of the aforementioned continuing work to fully develop Arizona A-F Letter Grade System to fairly evaluate small schools, K-2 schools, and alternative schools, approximately 417 schools did not receive Letter Grades in the 2010-2011 calculation, although all of these schools did receive a Legacy profile as required under state law. In July 2012, all Arizona public schools will receive a letter grade.

*The following list and tables annotate Arizona’s timeline for implementation of this proposal. Aside from other Federal reporting throughout the year (e.g., CSPR, ED Facts, deliverables for Special Education, AMAOs for Title III funding, etc.) the state has outlined what this implementation will entail for ADE.*

#### **PROPOSED TIMELINE OF IMPLEMENTATION:**

2012—February

- ADE submits ESEA Flexibility Request to converge the state’s new accountability system (adopted in June 2011) with new SGT specifications thus utilizing the growth model to its fullest capacity (i.e., as a normative tool in the A-F Letter Grade System and as a criterion-referenced tool for AMO requirements).

2012—February-April

- ~~Working with the state’s stakeholders and the State Board of Education to make adjustments to Arizona’s new A-F Letter Grade System (e.g., incorporating Arizona students who take AIMS A).~~
- ~~Continue outreach and communication efforts with all stakeholders on Arizona’s flexibility request.~~

~~2012—March-May~~

- ~~Work with U.S. Department of Education and stakeholders across the state to fully develop the February ESEA Flexibility Request Proposal into an operational guideline for the ADE and Arizona schools.~~

~~2012—April-May~~

- ~~Write syntax and troubleshoot for three new A-F Letter Grade accountability models for K-2 schools, Alternative schools, and Small schools. *Perceived obstacles: Time will not allow for a preliminary run of data before full implementation in June of 2012.*~~
- ~~Research & Evaluation Accountability Advisory Group will meet to develop and set new SGT targets.~~

~~2012—June—July~~

- ~~Run current A-F Letter Grade System and three new parallel models. *Perceived obstacles: delay in data extraction and complications from parallel models.*~~
- ~~Report Reward, Focus and Priority Schools to USED and ADE School Improvement division for identification for the 2012-2013 school year.~~
- ~~Compute **existing** formulas/AMOs for schools & LEAs~~

~~2012—August~~

- ~~Communicate with schools and LEAs what the labels “Focus” and “Priority” schools means to them.~~

~~2012—September-December~~

- ~~Communicate and collaborate with stakeholders, educators and Arizona leaders statewide in preparation for implementation of the new accountability system to start the 2013-2014 school year. *Perceived obstacles: Concern from stakeholders about the amount of changes that are being made over the next five years.*~~
- ~~Troubleshoot with ADE IT on automating and making available to every Arizona school new SGTs for each Arizona student.~~
- ~~Develop training on individual Student Growth Targets and pilot utilization with Arizona Priority Schools~~
- ~~Calculate the Bottom 25% of students to be used for school accountability for SY13~~

~~2013—January~~

- ~~If agreed upon by stakeholders introduce legislation to incorporate the proposed SGTs into the A-F Letter Grade System as part of the letter grade earned by schools and LEAs.~~

~~2013—February-May~~

- ~~Continue to communicate with stakeholders on how to incorporate the SGTs into the A-F Letter Grade System (pending legislation).~~

~~2013—June-September~~

- ~~Run the state’s A-F Letter Grade models (including all parallel models) assigning letter grades to all public schools and LEAs.~~
- ~~Calculate the new proposed SGTs for all students statewide. *Perceived obstacles: The volume of reporting the data and automating the SGTs for the SEA prior to August when many LEAs begin their*~~

*school year may be difficult in the first year.*

- Calculate and report AMOs for schools and LEAs.

~~2013—September–May 2014~~

- ~~Arizona high schools will be held accountable for a 15% CCRI graduation component added to the A-F Letter Grades which includes an emphasis on a four-year graduation rate but includes 5-year, 6-year, and 7-year rates.~~
- ~~Begin second year of educator evaluation pilot incorporating SGTs.~~
- ~~Calculate the Bottom 25% of students to be used for school accountability for SY14~~
- ~~Plan with ADE IT the amount of data that will be collected from the new PARRC assessment and the timeframe in which to collect the data. Perceived obstacles: Planning integrity runs on data in the timeframe of the accountability season.~~
- ~~Communicate with State Board on the transition to the new assessment.~~

~~2014—June–July~~

- ~~Fully operationalizing the A-F Letter Grade System and all parallel models possibly incorporating the SGT system. This includes the designation of “Reward,” and possibly updating the list of “Focus” and “Priority” schools.~~

~~2014—August–October~~

- ~~Pilot an evaluation system for extremely small schools that do not receive letter grades.~~
- ~~Pilot an A-F Letter Grade Accountability System for online schools that do not receive a letter grade.~~
- ~~Complete the calculations for the remaining 10% of the CCRI.~~

**Table 2.6a: Proposed Timeline for Implementation**

2011-2012 school year		February	March	April	May	June–July
	ESEA	Submit Flexibility Request	Revise Flexibility Request w/USED			Report Reward, Focus, and Priority Schools to US ED and ADE School Improvement
	ESEA					Compute new AMOs for schools & LEAs (pending approval from USED)
	A-F Letter Grades	Pending State Board approval: amend new A-F Letter Grade System and recommend parallel models—Alternative School, K-2, and Small Schools’ models			Write syntax and troubleshoot Parallel Models	Compute 2012 A-F Letter Grades including all 3 parallel models and LEA model
	Other Federal deliverables throughout the year (e.g., CSPR, ED Facts, deliverables for Special Education, AMOAs for Title III funding, etc.)					

2012-2013 school year		August	September–December	January	February–May	June–July
	ESEA					• Compute AMOs, and report AMO designation on School Report Cards

	<b>A-F Letter Grades</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with schools and LEAs that have “Focus” and “Priority” schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the students in the Bottom 25% for SY13 schools</li> <li>• Communicate the new SGT system with stakeholders</li> <li>• Work with Dr. Betebenner on SGT algorithm</li> <li>• Work with ADE IT to start automating the SGTs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Troubleshoot the SGT system</li> <li>• Continue communication with stakeholders</li> <li>• Work with ADE IT to display AMO designations on School Report Cards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compute 2013 A-F Letter Grades all 5 models (4 school models and an LEA model)</li> </ul>
		<i>Other Federal deliverables throughout the year (e.g., CSPR, ED Facts, deliverables for Special Education, AMAOs for Title III funding, etc.)</i>			

2013-2014 school year

	August	September – May	June – July
<b>ESEA</b>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce SGTs for every student in AZ</li> <li>• Report AMO designations on School Report Cards</li> <li>• Identify “Reward,” and possibly update “Focus” and “Priority” schools</li> </ul>
<b>A-F Letter Grades</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All schools using Arizona’s Common Core Standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the students in the Bottom 25% for SY14 schools</li> <li>• Troubleshoot A-F Letter Grade calculation programming</li> <li>• Provide professional development statewide on how to utilize the new SGTs in the classroom</li> <li>• Work with ADE IT on the data that will be collected from the new assessment and the timeframe</li> <li>• Communicate with the State Board on the transition to the new assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace 15% of high school letter grade determinations with CCRI graduation rate component.</li> <li>• Compute 2014 Letter Grades, all models</li> </ul>
	<i>Other Federal deliverables throughout the year (e.g., CSPR, ED Facts, deliverables for Special Education, AMAOs for Title III funding, etc.)</i>		

2014-

	August	September - May	June - July
--	--------	-----------------	-------------

2015  
school  
year

<b>ESEA</b>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pending new assessment data</li> <li>• Report test participation rates</li> </ul>
<b>A-F Letter Grades</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All schools using Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research impact of new assessment on Arizona's A-F Letter Grade Accountability System's growth model and proficiency</li> <li>• Identify College and Career Ready indicators to be used in the Participation &amp; Success components of CCRI.</li> <li>• Rescale A-F Letter Grade scales for high schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report full CCRI data to schools and LEAs</li> <li>• Analyze new assessment data upon earliest availability</li> </ul>
	<i>Other Federal deliverables throughout the year (e.g., CSPR, ED Facts, deliverables for Special Education, 4M4Os for Title III funding, etc.)</i>		

2.A.ii Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide the corresponding information, if any.

<p><b>Option A</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The SEA includes student achievement only on reading/language arts and mathematics assessments in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and to identify reward, priority, and focus schools.</p>	<p><b>Option B</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system or to identify reward, priority, and focus schools, it must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. provide the percentage of students in the “all students” group that performed at the proficient level on the State’s most recent administration of each assessment for all grades assessed; and</li> <li>b. include an explanation of how the included assessments will be weighted in a manner that will result in holding schools accountable for ensuring all students achieve college- and career-ready standards</li> </ul>
---	---

A.R.S. §15-241 D(3) requires the inclusion of academic performance and academic gain on the Science portion of the AIMS assessment in all achievement profiles assigned to schools and LEAs beginning in FY 2015. During the transition period adopted by the legislature this year (SB 1289), Arizona intends to include Science performance in the identification of Reward schools. Science is assessed statewide all students in grades 4, 8, and once in high school. This will be the first year AIMS and AIMS A Science will play a role in Arizona’s accountability system. Schools may qualify for Reward status based Science proficiency of all students.

Additionally, schools may also receive a Reward designation due to ELL reclassification rates on AZELLA. Pursuant to A.R.S. §15-756.05, all students with an ELL need are required to annually reassess until proficient in English. In FY14, 97% of students with an ELL need tested on the AZELLA Spring Reassessment with 28% testing proficient. A.R.S. 15-752 mandates English only in Arizona instruction; thus, the statewide assessment to measure College and Career Readiness is in English only. English language proficiency should be emphasized in the Reward and Focus criteria especially in regard to identifying low achieving subgroups – the intent of Focus.

An extensive description of the criteria to be used in identifying Reward, Focus and Priority schools during the transition period is included in the previous section.

## 2.B SET AMBITIOUS BUT ACHIEVABLE ANNUAL MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

Select the method the SEA will use to set new ambitious but achievable annual measurable objectives (AMOs) in at least reading/language arts and mathematics for the State and all LEAs, schools, and subgroups that provide meaningful goals and are used to guide support and improvement efforts. If the SEA sets AMOs that differ by LEA, school, or subgroup, the AMOs for LEAs, schools, or subgroups that are further behind must require greater rates of annual progress.

<p><b>Option A</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Set AMOs in annual equal increments toward a goal of reducing by half the percentage of students in the “all students” group and in each subgroup who are not proficient within six years. The SEA must use current proficiency rates based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year as the starting point for setting its AMOs.</p> <p>i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.</p>	<p><b>Option B</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Set AMOs that increase in annual equal increments and result in 100 percent of students achieving proficiency no later than the end of the 2019–2020 school year. The SEA must use the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year as the starting point for setting its AMOs.</p> <p>i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.</p>	<p><b>Option C</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Use another method that is educationally sound and results in ambitious but achievable AMOs for all LEAs, schools, and subgroups.</p> <p>i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.</p> <p>ii. Provide an educationally sound rationale for the pattern of academic progress reflected in the new AMOs in the text box below.</p> <p>iii. Provide a link to the State’s report card or attach a copy of the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year in reading/language arts and mathematics for the “all students” group and all subgroups.</p> <p>(Attachment 8)</p>
--	---	--



~~Arizona is exercising Option B proposing AMOs for 2011-2012 through 2012-2020 with a goal of reaching 100% proficiency in 2020. Using the average statewide proficiency on AIMS in the 2010-2011 school year, Arizona calculated the difference between this starting point and 100% in 2020. The difference was then divided into equal annual increments that culminate in 100% proficiency in 2020. These AMOs were set for each grade, separately for mathematics and reading. Arizona believes firmly in closing achievement gaps by raising the academic achievement of the lowest performing students. This is why the growth of bottom quartile students is double-counted in our A-F Letter Grade System. To extend this principle to the AMOs Arizona will discontinue Option B and begin setting AMOs based on Option A, starting 2014-2015 school year with the goal to reduce the percentage of non-proficient students by half within six year. The targets and baseline year will reset because of the initial implementation of AzMERIT in the 2014-2015 school year. The AMOs will be set for all students and each subgroup in each grade, separately for mathematics and reading. Scale scores from full academic year students are used; the cohort graduation rate will continue to be used.~~ Arizona proposes that in order to meet AMOs, schools must have students in all traditional ESEA subgroups and all bottom quartile students perform at or above the AMO targets for each grade and subject combination. To emphasize the importance of achieving proficiency for all students, the state will monitor the progress yearly and if necessary, re-evaluate the targets based on statewide performance which may vary significantly in the second year of a new assessment due to practice effect. The baseline year of 2014-2015 will also serve as the first year of the AMOs for which schools will be held accountable.

These AMOs follow, philosophically, the AMOs set under the AYP system. ~~While these newly proposed AMOs are more achievable, they are still very~~ The AMOs will remain ambitious and maintain the high expectation of excellence for all students, particularly those in the bottom quartile. Including the bottom quartile students in this requirement ensures that ALL struggling students are captured in the accountability model and connects logically with the method Arizona proposes for identifying achievement gaps in Focus Schools (see section 2.D.). Table 2B.1 shows the AMOs for each year, by grade and subject from 2012 through 2020.

The following AMOs will be reset in January 2016 based on 2014-2015 student achievement data on Arizona's new statewide assessment of English/Language Arts and Mathematics.

**Table 2B.1.: 2012-2020 AMO for AIMS Percent Proficient by Grade and Subject**

Grade	Subject	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
		Percent Proficiency on AIMS	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO
3	Math	69	72	76	79	83	86	90	93	97	100
	Read	77	80	82	85	87	90	92	95	97	100
4	Math	66	70	74	77	81	85	89	92	96	100
	Read	76	79	81	84	87	89	92	95	97	100
5	Math	64	68	72	76	80	84	88	92	96	100
	Read	80	82	84	87	89	91	93	96	98	100
6	Math	61	65	70	74	78	83	87	91	96	100
	Read	82	84	86	88	90	92	94	96	98	100

7	Math	63	67	71	75	79	84	88	92	96	100
	Read	83	85	87	89	91	92	94	96	98	100
8	Math	56	61	66	71	76	80	85	90	95	100
	Read	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	97	100
9-12	Math	63	67	71	75	79	84	88	92	96	100
	Read	79	81	84	86	88	91	93	95	98	100

Another intention of Arizona's ESEA Flexibility Request is to meet the needs of more students under the new A-F Letter Grade accountability system than were previously served using the former AYP Accountability System. Under the former accountability system, schools were required to make AYP for each grade and subgroup in order for the school to make AYP. However, if the school had less than 40 students in a particular grade/subgroup combination, the grade/subgroup combination was given an automatic "pass" from the AYP determination. Essentially, if a school had 10 grade-5 SPED students, none of those students would be counted in the school's AYP determination. Comparatively, under the new A-F Letter Grade accountability system, ALL SCHOOLS will be held accountable for reading and mathematics performance of the bottom 25% of students, regardless of the students' race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, or any other subgroup membership. The combining of these subgroups to consider all students in the bottom 25% will hold schools accountable for more students since they will not have to meet the "n count" threshold (40 or more students) for each grade/subgroup combination.

Based on data from the 2011 computations for both AYP and the first year of the A-F Letter Grade calculations, the number of students that would be included under the proposed system increases substantially, particularly in Arizona's less populated subgroups. Table 2.6c shows the number of students attending Title I schools excluded in 2011 from AYP calculation because of the "n count" rule, by subgroup. Table 2.6c, also shows the number and percent of schools in which students in the subgroups were not counted. For example, under ESEA the ELL subgroup was not counted in 1,077 of schools, while under the A-F Letter Grade system, the performance AND growth of all ELL students will have some weight towards a school's grade.

**Table 2B.2: Number of Students from Title I Schools Excluded from AMO Determinations in 2011 and Number of Schools not held Accountable for Subgroups under ESEA for Reading**

Subgroup	Number of Students Excluded	Number of Schools with Any Students Excluded	Percent of Schools with Any Students Excluded
ELL	3,464	1,077	88%
SPED	3,967	1,122	91%
FRL	1,892	595	48%
Asian	1,888	740	60%
Black	2,874	913	74%
Hispanic	2,524	774	63%
Native American	2,417	923	75%
White	3,084	923	75%

Note: The numbers represent Reading; however, the numbers from the mathematics data did not vary greater than 3 students in any category — with the exception of the

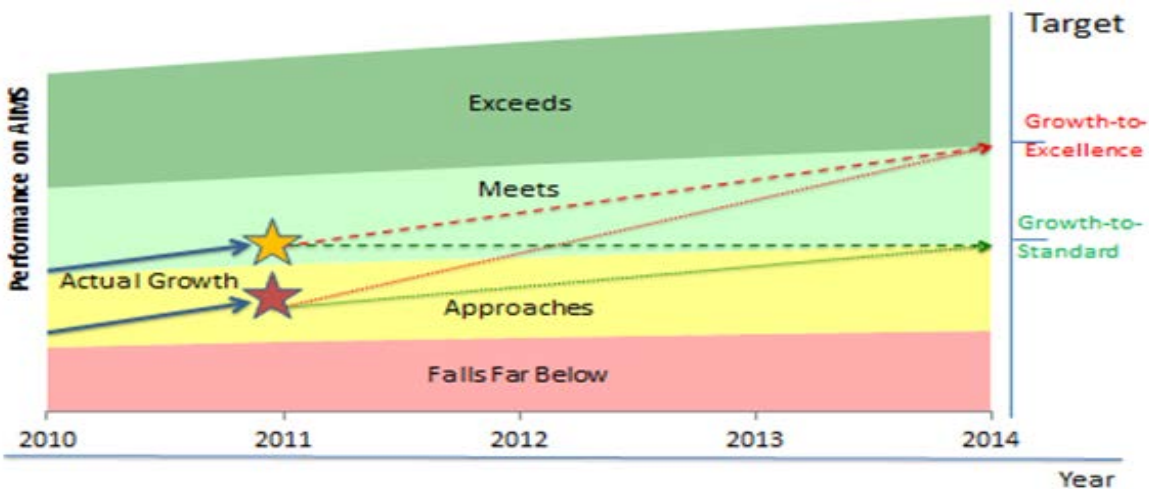
**number of students with disabilities excluded (i.e., Reading = 3,967; Mathematics = 3,864).**

Simultaneously, Arizona is initiating a **Student Growth Target (SGT)** measure to identify the necessary academic growth a student would need in order to get on or stay on track toward proficiency and college- and career-readiness. The state wants each teacher in Arizona to utilize the student level data provided from the SGT to help drive individualized instruction. This will arm every teacher with the knowledge they need regarding what level of academic growth is required for their students to get on a path to excellence. The state projects that the student level SGTs will be fully implemented statewide in the summer of 2013.

The SGTs will allow the state to determine whether a student's observed academic growth in a given year was sufficient, benchmarked to grade-level proficiency on AIMS.

To illustrate how the SGT can be understood, take the example provided in Figure 2.5. The state begins by identifying the student's current year status. In this case, the student indicated by the red star is below grade level, having performed in the "Approaches" category, below the proficiency mark. In order to reach proficiency within 3 years, this student would need relatively high growth. To reach academic excellence, indicated by scoring in the "Exceeds" category, this student would need extremely high growth. Now, take for example, the student indicated by the gold star. This student was proficient in the current year, having scored in the "meets" category on the AIMS test. However, without high levels of growth in the next three years, this student will not be college- and career-ready in mathematics by grade 10.

**Figure 2.5: Examples of Student Growth**



To reach these targets, a lower status student will need very high, sustained growth to get on track for college- and career-readiness. For high achieving students, only modest growth is required to stay on grade level. However, for these excelling students, simply staying above the proficient mark is not a high enough benchmark; schools must work to inspire their best students and push them beyond their perceived limits. These efforts can be measured by assessing not just whether students

~~made adequate growth meet the minimum state standards, but whether or not their growth puts them on a path to excellence.~~

~~Armed with this information, school leaders, teachers, and parents can understand not just a student's current status, but the direction in which this student is headed, and can intervene in time if necessary. This focus on individual students provides incentives to acknowledge and count the growth of ALL students. Achievement gaps are measured for each student against the mark of college- and career-readiness, rather than just measuring differences between groups. In this way, the state sets high, on-going expectations for all subgroups. ADE strives for all students who move through Arizona's system, today and into the future, to be ready for higher education and the careers that await them.~~

~~This proposed system is very beneficial to Arizona students and is a necessity for Arizona public school teachers to guide all students toward college- and career-readiness. The student-level data provided from the state's proposed SGTs will give all stakeholders insight on the students' progress — of Arizona's lowest performing students, every individual subgroup, every public school, and every district in the state. Over the next year the state will work in-house to finalize the IT aspects of the system, seek input from various stakeholders on how to utilize this information, and navigate the legislative and state rule changes necessary to incorporate these SGTs into the state's A-F Letter Grade System for the 2013-2014 school year. Eventually, the ADE would like to use the A-F Letter Grade System (including the SGTs) to respond to both state and federal deliverables. Arizona believes that schools should be held accountable for the degree to which their students perform academically and whether they are on-track for success. This is a primary focus of the state's proposed school improvement efforts and support strategies.~~

## 2.C REWARD SCHOOLS

**2.C.i Describe the SEA's methodology for identifying highest-performing and high-progress schools as reward schools . If the SEA's methodology is not based on the definition of reward schools in *ESEA Flexibility* (but instead, e.g., based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), the SEA should also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department's "Demonstrating that an SEA's Lists of Schools meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions" guidance.**

Section 2.A. contains the description of the full methodology used to identify Reward schools statewide. In order to ensure schools with insufficient quantitative data can be recognized, schools which must rely on the qualitative label solely in 2014 and subsequent years may be recognized for high progress, if they increase two levels to either Meets or Exceeds Standards in the current year. Because the Reward High Performance label requires schools to demonstrate a level of performance that Exceeds peers statewide on several measures, a school solely evaluated within the MAP or ASBCS Framework will demonstrate a minimum of exceeds standard in the current year. The utilization of the MAP or ASBCS Framework labels will only apply when a school qualifies for MAP evaluation as previously described.

The requirement to meet the annual AMO prevents any school with persisting or widening achievement gaps to become identified as a Reward School. Also, schools identified as Focus or Priority cannot receive Reward distinction

The ADE proposes using the state's A-F Letter Grade system as the foundation to identify Arizona's highest performing schools and those making the most progress as "Reward Schools". Schools that exhibit both high current standing and high progress should be recognized and rewarded for their exemplary work. For high performing Reward Schools, schools that have a letter grade of 'A' were selected as those in the state with the top performance, with the additional requirement that the overall grade must be accompanied by having above average achievement and growth among their bottom quartile students. High schools have to achieve a 4-year cohort graduation rate of greater than 80% on the most current data. These schools must also meet the AMOs discussed in section 2.B. to be a Reward school.

For high progress Reward Schools, schools that have a letter grade of 'A' or 'B' were selected, with the additional requirement that the school have above average growth for all students, above average achievement and growth among their bottom quartile students. High schools have an additional requirement of having among greater than 10 percentage points of growth in graduation rates over the past 3 years. The criteria are summarized in Table 2.7. Note the schools identified in Table 2.7 could fall into multiple categories. The total uniquely identified Reward Schools equal 100, based on data from 2011 letter grades for demonstration purposes.

**Table 2.7: Criteria for Reward Schools and Number of Schools Identified**

Category of School	Criteria	Number of Schools
<b>Title I Schools</b>		4,210
<b>Total Title I 'A' Schools</b>		114
	With high performance and growth among bottom quartile students	107
	High Schools, with graduation rate > 80%	15
	Meeting AMOs*	103
<b>Total Schools Meeting All High Performing Reward Criteria (A)</b>		87
<b>Total Title I 'A' and 'B' Schools</b>		469
	With among the highest growth for all students	126
	High Schools with among the highest growth in graduation rates	18
<b>Total Schools Meeting All High Progress Reward Criteria (B)</b>		58
<b>Number of Uniquely Identified High Performing Reward Schools</b>		42
<b>Number of Uniquely Identified High Progress Reward Schools</b>		13
<b>Total Reward Schools (refer to Table 2)</b>		100

\*For demonstration purposes, the 2011 AYP determinations were used to identify schools meeting "AMOs".

The criteria for identifying 'A' schools in Arizona already closely parallels the criteria established for Reward Schools in the flexibility guidance. To achieve an 'A', Arizona schools must exhibit high student achievement in the current year, and their students must show high academic growth, relative to their peers. Adding the requirement that schools must meet AMOs to be considered a Reward school and requiring that high schools have high graduation rates ensures that Arizona's Reward Schools are indeed the exemplar Title I schools in the state.

Table 2.7a highlights the achievements of the schools identified as high performing Reward Schools and high progress Reward Schools, with results for Title I schools not identified as Reward Schools by way of comparison. The results in Table 2.7a clearly indicate that the academic performance of students in Reward Schools is among the highest in the state and this performance is sustainable over time, based on the total points earned in the A-F Letter Grade System. Arizona Reward Schools also show considerably more growth than Title I non-Reward Schools. By definition, the average SGP of all students in the state is 50. Among the high performing Reward Schools, the average (median) SGP for all students was 61 (see Table 2.7a), and the average median SGP for the bottom quartile of students was 64, 13 percentile points above the average for Non-Reward Schools. For the high progress Reward Schools, the average SGP for all students was 65, and the average median SGP for the bottom quartile of students was 67. On average, these schools showed the highest growth for all students and for their bottom quartile students. Beyond achievement on the AIMS test, the average graduation rate for these schools was 78.6% (see Table 2.7a).

**Table 2.7a: Performance and Graduation Rates of the Reward Schools and Non-Reward Title I Schools**

<b>Reward Criteria</b>	<b>High Performing Schools</b>	<b>High Progress Schools</b>	<b>Non-Reward Title I Schools</b>
Total Points, A-F Letter Grade System	148	149	111
Average Percent Passing, bottom quartile	53%	51%	18%
Average Median SGP, all students	61	65	48
Average Median SGP, bottom quartile	64	67	49
Average Graduation Rate, 2010	90%	66%	64%
Average Progress in Grad Rate, 2008-2010	5%	27%	6%

**2.C.ii Provide the SEA’s list of reward schools in Table 2.**

See Attachment Table 2 – Reward Schools (to be updated)

**2.C.iii Describe how the SEA will publicly recognize and, if possible, reward highest-performing and high-progress schools.**

Currently Arizona recognizes high performing schools by publically reporting Federal and State accountability status. ADE encourages staff from these schools to share their experiences through state conferences such as the “Leading Change” Conference.

ADE did solicit feedback from LEA and school staff on ways in which ADE can publicly recognize and reward schools in meaningful ways that are high performing, demonstrating strong growth and/or significantly closing the achievement gap. Based on current practice and recommendations from the field, ADE will recognize the State’s Reward Schools in the following ways:

**Meaningful Public Recognition**

The annual list of Reward Schools will be posted on ADE’s website and Reward School status will



be demonstrated on ADE’s new school report cards. Letters of acknowledgement will also be sent to LEAs listing their reward schools and highlighting ways the LEAs can publicize and reward their high performing schools. Reward Schools will be recognized at the annual Title I Mega Conference and each teacher will receive a Title I Reward School recognition pin.

### **Leadership Opportunities**

Reward schools will be honored as leaders across the state. The designation of a Reward School will provide opportunities to serve as key strategic partners in the work to raise achievement levels across the state. This will involve opportunities to serve on state level committees that will be addressing scaling up continuous improvement practices; serving as a school improvement peer network partner, a network of support for educational ideas and innovations where highly performing schools partner with schools in need of improvement so that districts and schools have opportunities to learn from colleagues and peers to support and sustain continuous school improvement; and presenting at state sponsored conferences, such as ADE’s Leading Change Conference and the Title I Mega Conference.

### **Financial Rewards**

Beyond public recognition and to support leadership opportunities, ADE will provide financial rewards. Reward Schools form the pool of schools eligible for Distinguished School status. Annually one school is selected from the High Progress and one from the High Performing Schools to be recognized as a Title I Distinguished School. A separate application process is used to select up to 10 finalists for on-site visits. A team of ADE staff and peer reviewers from the Committee of Practitioners makes the final determination. The two successful schools each receive a cash reward of \$5,000 at a recognition event held at the school. They are also invited to attend a national recognition ceremony and conference held each January/February.

## **2.D PRIORITY SCHOOLS**

**2.D.i Describe the SEA’s methodology for identifying a number of lowest-performing schools equal to at least five percent of the State’s Title I schools as priority schools. If the SEA’s methodology is not based on the definition of priority schools in *ESEA Flexibility* (but instead, e.g., based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), the SEA should also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department’s “Demonstrating that an SEA’s Lists of Schools meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions” guidance.**

See Section 2.A. for a description of the full methodology used to identify a Priority school statewide. To integrate the recently approved MAP system in a way which parallels the proposed criteria, a school may be eligible for priority status based on 2014 below average performance (2014 A-F points less than 100) or a 2014 label below meet standards according to MAP or the ASBCS Academic Performance Framework. To be identified as a Priority school, the school would have to receive a falls far below standard label in the current year. Other Title I schools will be supported if they do not meet or fall far below standard according to their most recent Charter Board or MAP label only – these schools are not included in the number of Title I Focus schools but would be eligible for support.

The current list of Priority schools being submitted in this renewal reflects the former methodology. The revised table reflects the most current numbers of Priority schools after the former Exit criteria



have been applied.

The Arizona A-F Letter Grade System is the foundation used to identify Priority Schools, but the complete selection criteria are aligned with the flexibility definitions, as summarized in Table 2.8. The first criterion for Priority Schools is currently served Tier I and Tier II SIG schools. The second criterion is a Title I eligible school with a graduation rate less than 60% for 3 consecutive years. Consistent with the identification of Tier II Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools in 2009 and 2010, Title I eligible high schools that are accountable under the Alternative Schools Model, per A.R.S. §15-241, are not included in this criteria.

Finally, the lowest performing schools, using two criteria based on the A-F Letter Grade, are included as Priority Schools after removing the schools accountable under the Alternative Schools Model. First, all Title I schools with an overall grade of 'F' are identified. Second, Title I schools that have among the lowest overall points in the A-F Letter Grade System are selected. A school receives an 'F' letter grade by showing a history of low performance, but might not have the lowest total points in the current year. So, by including the schools with the lowest total points, we capture the schools with a history of poor performance and also those with the worst performance in the current year. See section 2.A. for a complete description of requirements for earning an 'F' in the 2011-2012 school year.

For schools accountable under the Alternative Schools Model, those Title I participating schools among the bottom 10% on total points in the A-F Letter Grade Alternative Model will be identified as Priority Schools. There were 78 Title I participating alternative schools in 2012; thus, the 8 with the lowest total points among the Alternative schools will be included as Priority Schools.

**Table 2.8: Criteria for Priority Schools and Number of Schools Identified**

Criteria	Number of Schools	Number of Unique Schools
Title I Schools	1,210	1,210
Number of Priority Schools required to be identified	61	61
Total currently served Tier I and Tier II SIG schools (E)	32	25
Title I eligible high schools with graduation rate < 60%* (D-1 & D-2)	15	11
Low Achieving Priority Schools (C)		
Title I 'F' schools**	9	6
Alternative schools with among the lowest 5% total points	8	8
Remaining Title I 'D' schools, with among the lowest 10% total points*	13	11
<b>Total Priority Schools</b>		<b>69</b>

\*Not including Alternative High Schools

\*\*The 2011-2012 school year will be the first cohort of identified 'F' schools. For this analysis, the definition of an 'F' school was applied to the data from the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 AZ Learns Legacy, and 2010-2011 A-F Letter Grades. Though these 9 schools did not receive an 'F' in 2011,

~~these identifications were made for demonstration purposes.~~

**Table 2D.1 Priority Criteria & Number of Schools**

<b>Priority Criteria</b>	<b>Number of Schools</b>
Total Title I Schools	1210
5% of Title I Schools required to be identified as Priority	61
<b>Exited Schools</b> +These are SIG Tier I or Tier II and Priority schools that have met the relevant criteria for exiting school improvement due to the priority label.	10
<b>Low Graduation Rate (D-1 and D-2)</b> +Title I eligible (but not participating) high school with 4-year cohort graduation rate less than 60% for 3 consecutive years (credit recovery alternative schools not included in this criteria)	5
<b>SIG Schools (E)</b> +Currently served Tier I or Tier II SIG school	19
<b>Low Achievement (Title I participating only) (C)</b> + Title I 'F' school + The lowest 5% of Title I alternative schools on the A-F Alternative total points + Among the lowest A-F total points (credit recovery alternative schools not included in this criteria)	34
<b>March 2015 Total Priority Schools</b>	68

~~In order to demonstrate that the methodology used for identifying Priority Schools aligns with the goals of the ESEA flexibility, the list of schools generated against each of the three criteria were compared to the remainder of Title I Schools (see Table 2.8a). The priority schools had, on average, 30% fewer students passing AIMS, and the 3 year graduation rate was 24 percentage points lower. Their students were 10 percentiles lower than the non Priority Title I schools, and the priority schools had an average of 40 fewer points in the A-F Letter Grade System.~~

**Table 2.8a: Performance of Priority and Non-Priority Title I Schools**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Priority Schools</b>	<b>Non-Priority Title I Schools</b>
-----------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------------

<del>Average Percent Passing</del>	<del>37</del>	<del>67</del>
<del>Average Growth Points—all students</del>	<del>39</del>	<del>49</del>
<del>Average Total Points</del>	<del>76</del>	<del>116</del>
<del>Average Graduation Rate</del>	<del>40%</del>	<del>64%</del>

**2.D.ii Provide the SEA’s list of priority schools in Table 2.**

See Attachment Table 2 – Priority and Focus (to be updated).

**2.D.iii Describe the meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles that an LEA with priority schools will implement.**

~~Arizona legislation governing differentiated accountability and support affords the state wide authority to intervene in LEAs and schools that are assigned a Letter Grade D or F. The intervention authority is separated by schools that receive a Letter Grade D and Letter Grade F in order to define requirements and timelines. In both cases, the LEA and Governing Board are responsible for the development and implementation of a continuous improvement plan at the school and LEA level communication and public meetings with stakeholders, and the submission of the plans to ADE for approval (A.R.S §15-241 subsection Sections K, L, N & Q). It is with this legislative authority that Arizona has established strong frameworks, structures and processes for LEAs and Governing Boards to utilize towards the goal of dramatically increasing student learning.~~

~~Although there are differentiated sections for charter holders and charter schools (A.R.S §15-241 subsection Sections M & U), the authority and requirements are parallel. The ADE School Improvement Division is committed to serving all schools in the improvement process both traditional and charter; however, none of these processes, supports, or interventions surpasses any other statutory authority, board policy, or contractual obligation with regard to charter school accountability.~~

~~For example, Arizona Revised Statutes specify that when a charter school is identified as Letter Grade F, the department must notify the charter’s sponsor of the designation. The charter’s sponsor shall restore the charter school to acceptable performance or revoke the charter school’s charter. Currently 36% of the priority schools in Arizona are charter schools. As stated, ADE is committed to fully and effectively serving these charters in the school improvement and intervention process.~~

It is ADE’s contention, based on research and prior experience in working with failing schools, that the entry point for systemic and sustainable reform at the school level is the Local Education Agency (LEA). In Arizona, LEAs include traditional school districts and charter holders. LEA leadership teams are charged with facilitating and monitoring the improvement efforts at both the school and LEA. ADE’s system of support for priority schools is focused on building the internal capacity necessary in LEAs to support and sustain effective turnarounds in the LEA’s lowest performing schools. LEAs with priority schools are responsible for the adoption of one of the four federal intervention plan models currently in place for SIG schools or developing a compelling and comprehensive plan of intervention that meets all of the seven turnaround principles outlined in the ESEA Flexibility Guidance.

It is ADE's contention, based on research and prior experience in working with failing schools, that the entry point for systemic and sustainable reform at the school level is the Local Education Agency (LEA). In Arizona, LEAs include traditional school districts and charter holders. LEA leadership teams are charged with facilitating and monitoring the improvement efforts at both the school and LEA. ADE's system of support for priority schools is focused on building the internal capacity necessary in LEAs to support and sustain effective turnarounds in the LEA's lowest performing schools. ~~LEAs with priority schools are responsible for the adoption of one of the approved SIG four federal intervention models currently in place for SIG schools under the FY 14 SIG Requirements or developing a compelling and comprehensive plan of intervention that meets all of the seven turnaround principles outlined in the ESEA Flexibility Guidance.~~

### ***Continuous Improvement Plans***

All LEAs in Arizona receiving Title I funds are required to submit an annual LEA and School Continuous Improvement Plan. ~~The LEA and school plans are housed in the state's web-based system: Arizona LEA Tracker (ALEAT). This system is discussed in detail in Section 2F.~~ ADE expects the LEA and School Continuous Improvement Plan to be the action plan for the meaningful interventions that an LEA with priority schools will implement aligned with the turnaround principles.

~~ADE has developed a Continuous Improvement Planning Process to ensure LEAs are poised and the conditions are set for the greatest success possible. The foundation of any strong, viable plan is the analysis of data and identification of the root cause of problem areas. It is from this foundation that an LEA will develop their continuous improvement plan to implement the interventions and define the assistance and support that the LEA will provide to the school to ensure success. ADE will provide assistance and collaborate with LEAs in any and all aspects of the school improvement planning process.~~

~~LEAs must determine the best way to customize the interventions for implementation in their school, based on the current status of the LEA and school system. This will be greatly facilitated through the use of the new SGTs. These new reports will not only tell schools the status of students, but school leaders, teachers, and parents will have a greater understanding of where they have been academically and where they may be headed without appropriate intervention. The SGTs cannot only be aggregated by subgroup and school but also by grade level and program for more detailed analysis. As discussed in 2A and 2B, Arizona will be moving forward with the introduction of SGTs while using the established and approved AMOs.~~

Prior to selecting an intervention model ~~and completing the a model template~~, LEAs with priority schools will submit ~~either~~ an annual Self-Readiness Assessment (SRA), a local needs assessment or an on-site readiness report. The SRA, ~~needs assessment and/or on-site readiness report~~ is designed to engage the school community in an in-depth evaluation of the seven turnaround principles and must be completed by a team of stakeholders. Primary concerns, successes, and root causes will be identified and action steps necessary to either maintain successes or address concerns will be recorded. The ~~SRA's~~ findings are intended to direct the school's improvement plan development and the LEA's strategies and action steps to support the implementation of the selected model. Additionally, the ~~SRA serves as a document findings serve~~ to target ADE's feedback and technical assistance for LEAs and schools in priority status.

For each priority school, LEA's will be required to identify annual performance targets and ~~a minimum of three~~ milestones in mathematics, reading and/or graduation rate, for each of the three years, for all students. Targets must be aligned to the exit criteria and needs assessment findings, and are likely to substantially raise student achievement each year. LEAs will also be expected to address the needs of specific subgroups, particularly the bottom quartile, including English Language Learners, students with disabilities, and the lowest-achieving students, by identifying annual performance targets and milestones for each of the applicable subgroups for each priority school in mathematics, reading and/or graduation rate for each of the three years. ~~In addition, LEAs will be required to identify annual performance targets and a minimum of two milestones for each priority school for the following two leading indicators: non-academic school environment data and teacher performance data.~~ The annual performance targets will be identified in the schools continuous improvement plan as school-wide goals.

ADE fully expects research-based improvement strategies to be described in the continuous improvement plans, and reviews both the LEA's and priority school's plans to ensure strategies include all components of the selected intervention model and are likely to result in rapid increases in student achievement. Each plan must include the specific action steps the school will take to implement each of its identified improvement strategies with fidelity. In the development of improvement strategies for each of the intervention models, ADE expects LEAs to identify interventions specific to the priority schools' greatest performance challenges and root causes of these challenges. ADE will provide LEAs with priority schools technical assistance in identifying appropriate interventions. Priority schools are expected to disaggregate achievement results and address low performance for all students; as well as the student groups that are furthest behind or making the least amount of progress. If English Language Learners and/or students with disabilities are identified as the school's focus, the expectation would be that the improvement strategies include interventions for these subgroups.

LEAs with priority schools must submit their comprehensive LEA and School Continuous Improvement Plan to the ADE for approval. Once approved, the Superintendent must submit the LEA's plan to rapidly turnaround the struggling school to parents, community members and local stakeholders (A.R.S §15-241 subsection K, Q and S). Due to the systemic nature of this level of intervention, it is necessary and required that every staff member at the school actively participates in the reform efforts. This would include special education, non-core, English language teachers, and non-instructional staff, in addition to core classroom teachers, school administration and parents.

An LEA's plan will vary depending on their readiness and existing capacity to lead turnaround efforts. In the event that an LEA does not demonstrate the readiness, capacity or commitment to fully and effectively implement an intervention model, ADE will work with the LEA to develop and implement a capacity building plan for pre-implementation in order to establish the conditions necessary for a systemic and sustainable turnaround.

~~Arizona has identified 70 priority schools in 54 LEAs for the 2014-2015 school year. 25 of these schools are newly identified priority schools. These new priority schools were identified in April of 2014, after a review of the current priority list indicated a need to backfill the priority schools based on priority school closures in 2013 and 2014 that did not meet the federal SIG definition of school closure.~~

Per A.R.S. 15-808, the Arizona State Board of Education and State Board for Charter Schools has approved over 70 Arizona Online Instruction (AOI) Schools. These schools may operate virtual classrooms; computer assisted classrooms or blended models which include virtual instruction along with classroom instruction. Currently, there are 3 AOI priority schools.

### ***Meaningful Interventions Aligned with Turnaround Principles***

LEAs with priority schools are responsible for the adoption of one of the ~~approved SIG~~ ~~four federal~~ intervention models ~~currently in place for SIG schools~~ under the FY 14 SIG Requirements or developing a compelling and comprehensive plan of intervention that meets all of the following seven turnaround principles outlined in the ESEA Flexibility Guidance:

~~Out of the 70 priority schools, 24 of them in 17 LEAs are Cohort I and II SIG schools currently implementing either the transformation or turnaround model with funds from Title I, Section 1003(g). The additional 46 priority schools in 41 LEAs will be eligible for the Cohort 3 SIG competition and if awarded will be required to implement one of the four SIG models: restart, closure, transformation or turnaround for three years. Awards for the Cohort 3 SIG competition will be used to support priority schools in LEAs that have:~~

- ~~• the greatest need for the funds;~~
- ~~• the readiness of LEA leadership to engage in school turnaround efforts focused on achieving dramatic gains and strategically supporting the reform effort; and~~
- ~~• the strongest commitment to use the funds to provide adequate resources in order to substantially raise the achievement of students in their lowest performing schools.~~

~~The remaining priority schools not receiving 1003(g) funds must then choose to implement for three years, one of the SIG models or may develop their own plan for intervention that meets all of the following turnaround principles:~~

- (i) providing strong leadership by: (1) reviewing the performance of the current principal; (2) either replacing the principal if such a change is necessary to ensure strong and effective leadership, or demonstrating to the SEA that the current principal has a track record in improving achievement and has the ability to lead the turnaround effort; and (3) providing the principal with operational flexibility in the areas of scheduling, staff, curriculum, and budget;*

Review of Leadership: An LEA with a priority school is required to review the effectiveness of the school's leaders to determine if the capabilities of the leader fit the specific demands of turning around a low performing school. LEA's with priority schools must select school leaders using locally adopted competencies identified by the LEA, that are based on the foundational competencies identified in the Public Impact report, "Turnaround Leadership Competencies", and necessary to turn around a priority school. Locally adopted competencies mean the knowledge, skills and abilities, developed by the LEA, which are associated with effective performance as a turnaround leader and supported by research-based evidence. The review will be in collaboration with ADE staff.

LEAs are required to use data from an approved evaluation system that is fully aligned to Arizona Framework for Measuring Educator Effectiveness to inform selection, placement, retention and incentive decisions for principals in priority schools. If the LEA determines to reassign the principal, the LEA shall collaborate with ADE on the reassignment.

LEAs will submit evidence to ADE in the form of a required assurance that the LEA has selected or retained an effective school leader for the priority school based on the above requirements. The LEA must replace school leaders deemed ineffective based on the above requirements. LEAs must include documentation to support the decision to retain effective school leaders or replace ineffective school leaders. The required assurance will include the principal's performance classification for the most recent school year.

In addition, LEAs are responsible for providing ongoing comprehensive, differentiated and individualized support to selected school leaders based on the LEA's plan for turning around its priority schools.

ADE recognizes that many of Arizona's priority schools are located in rural or extremely remote areas or are very small schools and, therefore, struggle to identify leaders with the turnaround competencies. ADE continues to look for innovative strategies to support these rural and extremely remote schools with recruitment, hiring and retention of a turnaround leader as well as effective teachers. In cases, where a turnaround principal is unable to be identified, ADE will continue to work with the LEA to identify the appropriate leader for the priority school, at the same time providing leadership development support for the priority school principal in place, along with a leadership coach and/or an ADE approved Implementation Specialist. LEA leadership will be expected to participate alongside the principal in the leadership development program.

LEAs with AOI priority schools are required to meet all of the above requirements for Review of Leadership.

*Differentiated Support:* The LEA must ensure that principals placed in priority schools have sufficient **operational flexibility** (including staffing, school schedules, and budgeting) to fully implement a comprehensive approach in order to substantially improve student achievement outcomes and increase high school graduation rates. The LEA must demonstrate commitment and capacity to align and prioritize the necessary resources to provide extensive supports for each priority school; to ensure flexibility, modify its practices, policies or oversight structures, outside of normal LEA constraints, if necessary to enable its school(s) to implement the interventions fully and effectively.

LEAs with AOI priority schools must ensure that principals placed in AOI priority schools have the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and online instruction and to manage continuous, digital operations effectively to be able to fully implement a comprehensive approach in order to substantially improve student achievement outcomes and increase high school graduation rates. The LEA must establish policies and procedures for validating the authenticity of student performance, defining expectations for student engagement and course completion, awarding course credits and grades and governing graduation requirements if issuing a diploma.



*(ii) ensuring that teachers are effective and able to improve instruction by: (1) reviewing the quality of all staff and retaining only those who are determined to be effective and have the ability to be successful in the turnaround effort; (2) preventing ineffective teachers from transferring to these schools; and (3) providing job-embedded, ongoing professional development informed by the teacher evaluation and support systems and tied to teacher and student needs;*

Effective Staffing: LEAs are required to use data from an approved evaluation system that is fully aligned to Arizona Framework for Measuring Educator Effectiveness to inform selection, placement, retention and incentive decisions for teachers in priority schools. This evaluation process is required of all staff including, but not limited to, general education, special education, Title I, and English language learners. Reading, science, and mathematics teachers cannot be retained or rehired unless they meet state and federal highly qualified, highly effective requirements. The LEA is required to retain instructional staff determined to be effective and reassign or replace instructional staff determined not to be effective. Based on the results of teacher evaluations which include student growth data, LEAs will make relevant staffing decisions to ensure that the strongest talent is working with students with the most need.

LEAs with AOI priority schools are required to meet all of the above requirements for Effective Staffing.

Transferring Teachers: LEAs are required to prevent ineffective teachers from transferring to priority schools. LEAs will be required to submit evidence to ADE that they have policies and practices in place to prevent ineffective teachers from transferring to a priority school.

LEAs with AOI priority schools are required to meet all of the above requirements for Transferring Teachers.

Staffing Support: Teacher performance is a leading indicator that has one of the strongest impacts on student achievement. In order to improve student learning, LEAs with priority school must hire and develop effective teachers. Priority schools must implement a walk-through classroom observation and feedback protocol that includes ongoing coaching and support to change teacher behavior and instructional practices that addresses the needs of a diverse group of learners. ~~LEAs with priority schools will submit the most recent results of the walk-through teacher observations twice a year to ADE in a data summary.~~

LEAs with a priority school must provide professional development that is data-driven, relevant to school needs, based in classroom practice, and reinforced through ongoing support. LEAs must implement a formal policy providing for organized weekly teacher collaboration time during the work day for teachers to work in vertical and horizontal teams for the purpose of improving instruction for all students including students with disabilities and ELLs. Teachers would share specific instructional strategies for low performing students including Structured English Immersion (SEI) strategies for ELLs. In addition, LEAs are encouraged to provide the priority school an academic coach to assist teachers in developing and modeling effective lessons, provide job embedded professional development, analyze data, and spend at least 80% of contracted time in the

classroom or working with teachers.

LEAs with AOI priority schools must hire and develop effective teachers in online learning environments. Teachers must engage students in their learning through online delivery and instructional strategies that ensure teacher effectiveness and student achievement of learning expectations. AOI priority school principals must monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success. AOI priority schools must implement an observation and feedback protocol using standards for quality online teaching. LEAs with AOI priority schools will submit the most recent results of the teacher observations twice a year to ADE in a data summary.

LEAs with AOI priority schools must provide professional development that is data-driven, relevant to school needs, based in classroom practice, and reinforced through ongoing support. LEAs with AOI priority schools must implement a formal policy for teacher collaboration time during the work day for the purpose of improving instruction for all students including students with disabilities and ELLs.

*(iii) redesigning the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration;*

Instructional Infrastructure: ADE firmly believes that increasing student learning time and teacher collaboration are critical to the achievement of the goals set by schools and LEAs. An LEA with a priority school will perform an instructional time audit. The audit will focus on teacher use of effective, research-based instructional strategies during core instruction as well as the use of scheduled learning time in the school day or extended day. Based on the audit findings, the LEA will create a plan to maximize current instructional time in core academic subjects; extend the school day, week and/or year; and/or extend programs outside the school day (before, after, weekend, intersession, online, or summer).

If the LEA contains elementary grades, the LEA must provide evidence that instructional time adheres to A.R.S §15-701. This statute requires additional time for intensive reading intervention for a student that does not achieve proficiency on the state assessment at the end of third grade. Additional time must include summer school reading instruction and additional reading instruction (before and after school time) during the next academic school year.

LEAs will incorporate structures to ensure that each priority school has sufficient time for the practice of professional learning communities (PLCs) providing a minimum of 60-90 minutes per week of data-driven discussions about student learning to inform instructional strategies. This PLC time should support deep item analysis and teacher action planning and will include participation from the priority school principal.

LEAs with AOI priority schools will perform an instructional time audit to ensure:

- Equity and Access-the online program's policies and practice support students' ability to access the program and accommodations are available to meet a variety of student needs;
- Effective Curriculum and Course Design-curriculum and courses are designed with consideration for time and place limitations of students; and
- Effective Instruction-includes frequent teacher to student interaction, teacher to parent

interaction, and fosters frequent student-to-student interaction.

LEAs with AOI priority schools must incorporate structures to ensure that each AOI priority school has sufficient time for the practice of professional learning communities (PLCs). LEAs with AOI priority schools must implement a formal policy for weekly teacher collaboration (PLC) which must incorporate best practices for collaboration in digital environments.

- (iv) strengthening the school's instructional program based on student needs and ensuring that the instructional program is research-based, rigorous, and aligned with State academic content standards;**

*Instructional Infrastructure:* An LEA with a priority school is required to implement a rigorous standards-based curriculum, along with corresponding pacing guides, that provides flexibility to meet the needs of all students, including students with disabilities, ELLs, gifted and talented, and economically disadvantaged students. The implemented curriculum must be fully aligned with the Arizona's **College and Career Ready Standards (AZCCRS)**. LEA's must (Reference A.R.S §15-701) complete a data-based curriculum review to evaluate: if instructional resources (both core and supplemental) align to standards, including the ELP standards, in all curricular areas; if instructional resources (both core and supplemental) are current/up-to-date, and sufficient in quantity; and if curriculum implementation is producing high academic outcomes for all grades and subgroups, including students with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency.

LEAs with AOI priority schools are required to implement a rigorous standards-based curriculum that provides flexibility to meet the needs of all students, including students with disabilities, ELLs, gifted and talented, and economically disadvantaged students. Implemented content and assignments for core courses must be explicitly and thoroughly aligned with the Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards (AZCCRS), curriculum frameworks and assessments. LEAs with AOI priority schools must design monitor and systematically revise curriculum, instruction and assessments in response to data from multiple assessments of student learning and an examination of professional practice of digital education. A variety of activities, assignments, assessments, and resources are used to provide students with different paths to master the content.

- (v) using data to inform instruction and for continuous improvement, including by providing time for collaboration on the use of data;**

*Instructional Infrastructure:* An LEA with a priority school is required to use data to inform instruction. LEAs must demonstrate implementation of a balanced assessment strategy, data systems, effective data analysis processes, and data-driven instructional practices. The LEA's plan must include: **common** interim assessments aligned to curriculum for reading and mathematics; assessments that will take place at least 3x per year; and a data management process to ensure that the system provides up-to-date data reports to allow for deep analysis of student, teacher, and school level data. **Additional PLC time should be scheduled within a couple days of the interim results, to support deep item analysis and teacher action planning and will include participation from the priority school**

principal.

In addition, the LEA must ensure that the priority school has an effective intervention system in place for struggling students and that the effectiveness of the intervention practice is measured regularly.

LEAs with AOI priority schools must take a comprehensive, integrated approach to measuring student achievement. This includes use of multiple assessment measures and strategies that align closely to both program and learner objectives, with timely, relevant feedback to all stakeholders. LEAs with AOI priority schools must meet the above requirements for using data to inform instruction. LEAs with AOI priority schools are required to implement a rich variety of instructional and assessment methods. Engaging materials and authentic assessments must be used throughout the course to allow students to demonstrate achievement of the goals and objectives of the course.

LEAs with AOI priority schools must ensure the priority school offers courses that provide options for the instructor to adapt the course to meet the students' needs by providing additional assignments, resources, and activities for remediation and/or enrichments for the course.

**(vi) establishing a school environment that improves school safety and discipline and addressing other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, and health needs; and**

Leadership: An LEA with a priority school is required to focus on creating a sustained culture of high expectations for all students, which includes academic and non-academic factors that have contributed to the school's failure. Leaders, teachers and staff need to promote high expectations of students and recognize and accept their professional role in the success and failure of all students in the school. Key factors impacting school climate may include, but are not limited to, a person's perception of their personal safety, interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning, as well as the external environment.

ADE recognizes the connection between school climate and culture and staff member satisfaction, parent engagement and community support. LEAs with priority schools must conduct a bi-annual review of the priority school's non-academic factors that impact student achievement, including the social and emotional environment, using a valid and reliable survey instrument that measures the school's climate and culture. ~~LEAs will establish measurable goals based on the data and submit the results of the priority school's survey data twice a year to ADE in the data summary.~~

LEAs with AOI priority schools are required to implement support services to meet the learning and safety needs of the student population being served within the digital learning environment. Services provided must support the counseling, assessment, referral, educational and career planning needs of all students. LEAs with AOI priority schools must have sufficient qualified professional and support personnel to fulfill their roles and responsibilities necessary to support the institution's purpose and direction and student success in the digital learning environment. In addition, LEAs with AOI priority schools must establish standards for teacher to student communication. LEAs with AOI priority schools are required to conduct a bi-annual review of the priority school's non-

academic factors that impact student achievement, including the social and emotional environment, using a valid and reliable survey instrument that measures the school's climate and culture.

**(vii) providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement?**

*Leadership:* To ensure that an LEA with a priority school fosters community relationships to assist with the improvement efforts and increase community capacity, the LEA must increase the role that family engagement plays as part of a comprehensive strategy to increase student engagement and achievement. The LEA must ~~provide~~ include strategies and action steps in their continuous improvement plan ~~a multifaceted plan~~ for increased parental and community involvement that is communicated to all stakeholders ~~and aligned with the school's CIP~~ (parent/community coordinator, parent organization, parent workshops, marquee, newsletters, websites, meeting, parent/teacher conferences, etc.). In addition, LEAs with priority schools must provide evidence that effective communication is used to gather stakeholder feedback and support in order to implement the selected intervention model.

In a quality online program, parents and guardians play an integral part in their students' educational life. They work as a team with faculty, administrators, guidance services, and organizational support to ensure a quality educational experience for their students. LEAs with AOI priority schools must provide families with information about the program, successful online student practices and supportive learning environments.

LEAs with AOI priority schools are required to meet the above requirements and submit a plan for increased parental and community support that ensures families receive critical information about student progress and are encouraged to communicate with faculty and administrators to best support the online learning student.

***Meaningful Interventions Aligned with Turnaround Principles for AOI Schools***

AOI priority schools are not exempt from implementing one of the required models. However, in order for ADE to address the unique needs of the models represented in the AOI schools and to ensure AOI priority schools are implementing meaningful interventions aligned with all of the turnaround principles, ADE will require LEAs with AOI priority schools to align their chosen intervention model with either the International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL) National Standards or the AdvancED Standards for Quality in Digital Learning Institutions. A crosswalk of the Turnaround Principles with iNACOL and AdvancED Standards is listed in Attachment 2H.

***Templates for Meaningful Interventions Aligned with Turnaround Principles***

~~Attachment 2.D contains the model template.~~ Each LEA must complete the model template in the ADE grants management system as part of their school improvement grant application for their priority schools based on which intervention model or plan the LEA intends to implement. LEAs that are implementing a SIG model with 1003(g) funds will have completed the template as a part of their SIG application. The template will be used as a guide to ensure that all of the turnaround

principles have been addressed. ~~The templates for priority schools will become part of the LEA's and school's Continuous Improvement Plan and will be submitted to ADE through ALEAT.~~

**2.D.iv Provide the timeline the SEA will use to ensure that its LEAs that have one or more priority schools implement meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles in each priority school no later than the 2014–2015 school year and provide a justification for the SEA's choice of timeline.**

Arizona has identified 68 Priority schools for the 2015-2016 school year (submitted in Table 2). Exit criteria from the approved flexibility request was run for each of the Priority schools, using the most recent data from 2013-14 school year. There are 10 Priority schools that have met the Priority exit criteria.

Arizona has identified ~~70~~ 69 priority schools for the 2014-2015 SY. ~~One school closed prior to the 2014-2015 school year.~~ The currently served 24 Cohort I and II SIG schools have already been implementing meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles for at least three years. The additional 46 priority schools are comprised of 25 newly identified priority schools that will begin year 1 of implementation in the 2014-2015 SY.

The remaining 21 priority schools consists of 11 priority schools that began full implementation of meaningful interventions aligned with all of the turnaround principles in the 2012-2013 SY. The remaining ~~40~~ 9 priority schools did not implement interventions aligned with all of the turnaround principles beginning in 2012-2013 or 2013-2014, specifically turnaround principle 1.

The plan to address newly identified priority schools and the ten priority schools that did not implement interventions aligned with turnaround principle 1 in 2012-2013 or 2013-2014 and to ensure that their first year of implementation occurs no later than the 2014--2015 school year includes the following:

1. At the end of the 13-14 school year, each LEA will submit evidence to ADE as to whether or not they will replace or retain the current principal. The evidence will be in the form of a required assurance and must include documentation to support the LEA decision to retain or replace. The required assurance will include the principal's performance classification for the 2013-2014 school year. June 2014. ~~Seven schools retained principals in the 2014-2015 school year and two schools replaced their principals.~~
2. For those principals the LEA is retaining, ADE will review the SY 2013-2014 state assessment outcomes for each of the priority schools to determine if the principal had improved achievement with the leadership development support provided in 2013-2014. In order to demonstrate improved achievement the priority school will have improved at least one letter grade, and/or had at least a 10% increase in proficiency in mathematics or reading. July 2014 ~~After the review of outcome data, three of the ten priority schools that retained their principal met the criteria and are fully implementing in 2014-2015.~~
3. For those principals the LEA will be replacing, the LEA will be required to submit evidence to ADE that the principal has a track record of improving student performance, once the new principal has been identified to support the hiring decision. The LEA will also be required to provide evidence that the LEA reviewed the effectiveness of the school leader



using locally adopted competencies identified by the LEA, that are based on the foundational competencies identified in the Public Impact report, “Turnaround Leadership Competencies”, and necessary to turn around a priority school. June-August 2014 **Two schools replaced their principals and meet the criteria to be fully implementing in 2014-2015.**

4. If the priority school has met the criteria to demonstrate improved achievement or provided evidence the newly hired principle has a track record of improving achievement, the priority school will be considered to be fully implementing all of the turnaround principles, including principle 1, for the 2014-2015 school year. **Five of the nine schools are fully implementing all of the turnaround principals in the 2014-2015 school year.**

The plan to address all priority schools that do not met the criteria to consider the 2014-2015 as their first year of full implementation all of the turnaround principles including principle 1 includes the following:

1. If the LEA is unable to provide evidence the principal in place for the 2014-2015 school year has a track record of improving achievement, ADE will provide leadership development support through trainings along with a leadership coach/mentor and/or an ADE approved Implementation Specialist. LEA leadership will be expected to participate alongside the principal in the leadership development program. ADE recognizes that many of Arizona’s priority schools are located in rural or extremely remote areas and/or very small and therefore struggle to identify leaders with the turnaround competencies. ADE continues to look for innovative strategies to support all priority schools with recruitment, hiring and retention of a turnaround leader as well as effective teachers. **Leadership support continues to be provided for the four schools that are not fully implementing principle 1.**
2. If a priority school is not demonstrating sufficient progress of performance targets, milestones or full implementation of the selected intervention model or plan, a mid-course adjustment to the plan or a corrective action plan will result. LEAs with priority schools will be required to submit a data summary three times a year to the ADE’s School Improvement and Intervention Section through ALEAT. ADE will use evidence provided by the LEA in the data summary to determine if the priority or focus school is making sufficient progress in meeting established milestones and performance targets. ADE will provide the LEA and school feedback through ALEAT on their progress of meeting the school’s targets. LEAs are expected to meet a minimum of 75% of their established performance milestones for student achievement in reading and mathematics for all students and for bottom quartile students. In addition, ADE will provide the LEA and school with a level of implementation rating for the selected model or plan during a 90 day cycle check. LEAs will be required to make any necessary mid-course adjustments to their continuous improvement plans after the 90 day cycle check.
3. At the end of the 2014-2015 school year, ADE will apply the same criteria that was used at the end of the 2013-2014 school year to determine if the principal has improved student achievement. The LEA will also be required to submit results of the principal’s performance at the end of the 2014-2015 school year as evidence of fully implementing principle 1. June-July 2015. **Due to the transition to a new assessment, ADE will not use the same criteria for growth but will review the 2014-2015 outcome data to determine if the school fully**



implemented Principle 1.

4. For LEAs with priority schools that continue to demonstrate insufficient progress of performance targets, implementation of the selected model or are resistive to implementing the interventions, ADE will re-evaluate capacity to determine continuation of school improvement funding. If the LEA does not provide evidence of implementation within 6 months of the corrective action plan, the school improvement grant funds will be discontinued, if received.

LEAs with priority schools that have not made sufficient progress to exit Priority status after three years must increase the rigor of interventions and supports in these schools. In order to ensure that implementation of more rigorous interventions are focused on the root causes for not making sufficient progress and exiting priority status, ADE will conduct a solutions team review of LEAs with priority schools focused on the current state of implementation of the seven turnaround interventions. These findings will assist the LEA in determining gaps in implementation of the turnaround interventions as well as the more rigorous interventions that must be implemented. ADE will assist the LEA in identifying and developing interventions that will specifically address data gaps and root causes as well as assure that every priority school will implement more rigorous interventions. LEAs with priority schools that have not met the exit criteria must address these interventions in the LEA and School Continuous Improvement Plans. Consistent with A.R.S §15-241 (K), LEAs with priority schools that have not met the exit criteria after three years will be required to inform their school community and local school board of their solutions team findings and how they intend to address the findings.

LEAs with priority schools that have not met the exit criteria after three years will also receive more intensive support and monitoring from the ADE. Section 2.G describes ADE's Differentiated System of Support for priority and focus schools. This year ADE will be piloting the Aligning Efforts: Integrated Support Model in LEA's with priority and focus schools that have been implementing interventions for over three years and have not met the exit criteria. These schools will receive more intense and aligned support from all of the program areas at the agency such as ESS, OELAS, K12 Standards, Title I, Highly Effective Teachers and Leaders as well as the Support and Innovation Unit. The level of support these schools will receive will be significantly focused and require individual schools and the district to commit to a series of assurances that demonstrate their willingness and capacity to engage in turnaround reforms.

Finally, LEAs with priority schools that continue to not make sufficient progress and exit priority status four years of intervention ADE may consider other options identified in A.R.S §15-241 (V-Z).

Timeline	Requirement	Persons/Group Responsible
April 2014	Notify all LEAs with newly identified priority schools	ADE
April 2014	Webinar for SIG application	ADE-SH
April 2014	Release Cohort 3 SIG application for all eligible priority schools	ADE-SH
May 2014	Priority school webinar (orientation for newly identified)	ADE-SH
May 2014	Priority school Cohort 3 SIG Awards	ADE-SH
June 2014	Cohort 3 SIG pre-implementation activities	LEA and School

May-July 2014	Current non-SIG priority schools continue year 2 implementation activities	LEA and School
July 2014	Release of 2014 Letter Grades	ADE
July 2014	ADE determine which of the 11 priority schools were fully implementing in 2013-2014; ADE notify those schools who will begin full implementation in 2014-2015	ADE
July 2014	LEAs submit Principal assurance to ADE	LEA
July-Aug. 2014	SRA completed; newly identified priority schools first submission; current priority schools second submission	LEA and School
July-Aug. 2014	Priority school grants released for schools non-SIG funded	ADE
August 2014	Continuous Improvement Planning workshops conducted by ADE	ADE
August 2014	<p>If a school is assigned a “D”, within 30 days of public release of letter grades, including priority status, LEAs must provide written notification to each residence within the attendance area of the school. The notice must provide an explanation of the improvement plan process and information regarding the required public meeting.</p> <p>If a school is assigned a “D”, within 30 days of public release of letter grades, including priority status, Charter schools must notify the parents of the students attending the school of the classification. The notice shall explain the improvement plan and process and provide information regarding the public meeting.</p>	LEA and School
Sept. 1, 2014	Turnaround Plan template submitted ALEAT/SH	LEA and School
Sept. 30, 2014	ADE approves all Turnaround Plan Templates	ADE-SH
October 2014	Continuous improvement plans submitted to ADE	LEA
October 2014	Within 90 days of public release of letter grades, LEAs/schools must submit a copy of the school's continuous improvement plan to the county educational service agency. In addition, a charter holder must present the completed plan to the charter sponsor at a public meeting.	LEA
November 2014	Within 30 days of submitting the continuous improvement plan the LEA shall hold a special public meeting in each priority school and present the CIP	LEA
2013-2014 SY	SH will provide technical assistance, professional learning, progress monitoring for each priority school	ADE-SH
2014-2015 SY	SH will provide technical assistance, professional learning, progress monitoring for each priority school	ADE-SH
Timeline	Requirement	Persons/Group Responsible

April 2014	Notify all LEAs with newly identified priority schools	ADE
April 2014	Webinar for SIG application	ADE-SII
April 2014	Release Cohort 3 SIG application for all eligible priority schools	ADE-SII
May 2014	Priority school webinar (orientation for newly identified)	ADE-SII
May 2014	Priority school Cohort 3 SIG Awards	ADE-SII
June 2014	Cohort 3 SIG pre-implementation activities	LEA and School
May-July 2014	Current non-SIG priority schools continue year 2 implementation activities	LEA and School
July 2014	Release of 2014 Letter Grades	ADE
July 2014	ADE determine which of the 11 priority schools were fully implementing in 2013-2014; ADE notify those schools who will begin full implementation in 2014-2015	ADE
July 2014	LEAs submit Principal assurance to ADE	LEA
July-Aug. 2014	SRA completed; newly identified priority schools first submission; current priority schools second submission	LEA and School
July- Aug. 2014	Priority school grants released for schools non-SIG funded	ADE
August 2014	Continuous Improvement Planning workshops conducted by ADE	ADE
August 2014	<p>If a school is assigned a “D”, within 30 days of public release of letter grades, including priority status, LEAs must provide written notification to each residence within the attendance area of the school. The notice must provide an explanation of the improvement plan process and information regarding the required public meeting.</p> <p>If a school is assigned a “D”, within 30 days of public release of letter grades, including priority status, Charter schools must notify the parents of the students attending the school of the classification. The notice shall explain the improvement plan and process and provide information regarding the public meeting.</p>	LEA and School
Sept. 1, 2014	Turnaround Plan template submitted-ALEAT/SII	LEA and School
Sept. 30, 2014	ADE approves all Turnaround Plan Templates	ADE-SII
October 2014	Continuous improvement plans submitted to ADE	LEA
October 2014	Within 90 days of public release of letter grades, LEAs/schools must submit a copy of the school’s continuous improvement plan to the county educational service agency. In addition, a charter holder must present the completed plan to the charter sponsor at a public meeting.	LEA
November	Within 30 days of submitting the continuous improvement	LEA

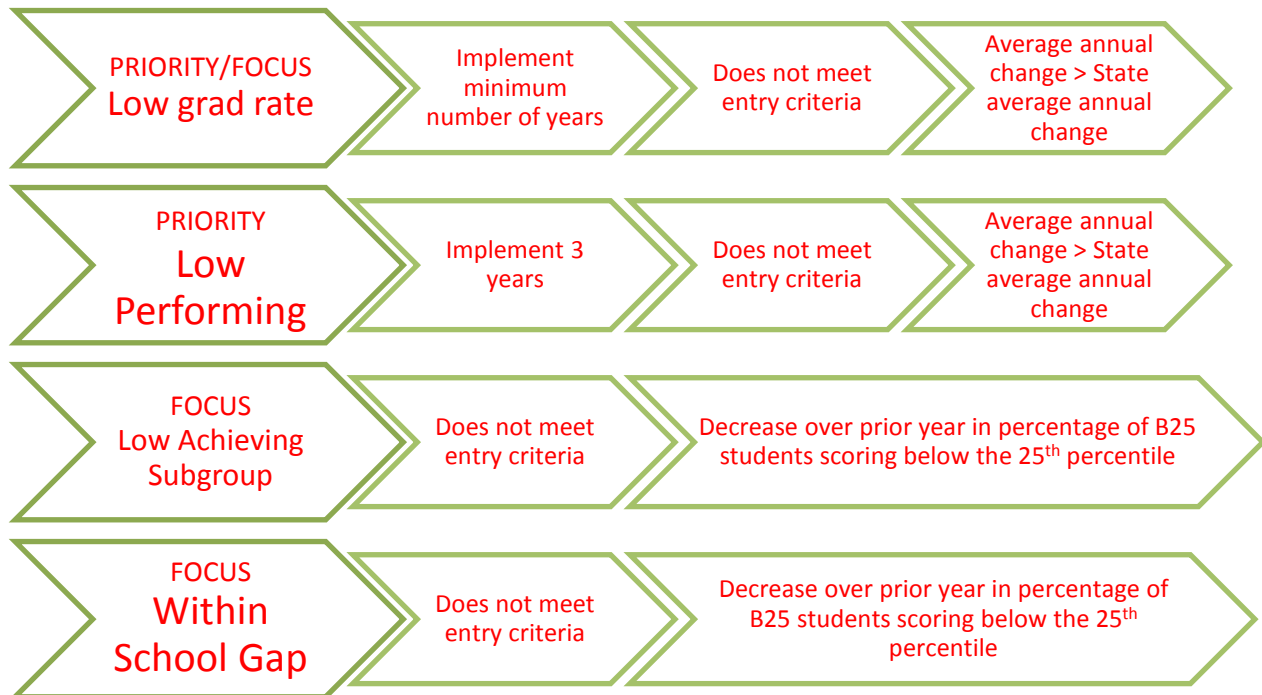
2014	plan the LEA shall hold a special public meeting in each priority school and present the CIP	
2013-2014 SY	SII will provide technical assistance, professional learning, progress monitoring for each priority school	ADE-SII
2014-2015 SY	SII will provide technical assistance, professional learning, progress monitoring for each priority school	ADE-SII

Cohort	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
<b>Cohort 1 SIG</b>	Year 3 Implementation of SIG Intervention Model	Year 4 Implementation of SIG Intervention Model	Continued support and monitoring for Cohort 1 SIG schools not meeting exit criteria			
<b>Cohort 2 SIG</b>	Year 2 Implementation of SIG Intervention Model	Year 3 Implementation of SIG Intervention Model	Year 4 Implementation of SIG Intervention Model	<b>Year 5 Implementation of SIG Intervention Model.</b> Continued support and monitoring for Cohort 2 SIG schools not meeting exit criteria		
<b>Cohort 3 SIG</b>		Pre- Implementation of SIG Intervention Model	Year 1 Implementation of SIG Intervention Model	Year 2 Implementation of SIG Intervention Model	Year 3 Implementation of SIG Intervention Model	<b>Year 4 Implementation of SIG Intervention Model</b>
<b>Cohort 4 SIG-P and F Schools</b>					<b>Year 1 SIG Implementation</b>	<b>Year 2 of SIG Implementation</b>
<b>Priority Schools</b>			<b>New State Assessment- AZMerit</b>	<b>Identify Priority schools based on new criteria</b>	<b>Year 1 Implementation of Selected Intervention Model</b>	<b>Year 2 Implementation of Selected Intervention Model</b>
<b>Priority Schools (10 schools)</b>	Year 1 Implementation of Selected Intervention Model	Year 2 Implementation of Selected Intervention Model	Year 3 Implementation of Selected Intervention Model	<del>Continued support and monitoring for schools not meeting exit criteria</del>		
<b>Priority Schools (11 schools)</b>	Did not fully implement all of the turnaround principles	Evidence of full implementation to be TBD after 2014 achievement data released-if met Year 1 Implementation of Selected Intervention Model	Year 1 Implementation of Selected Intervention Model	Year 2 Implementation of Selected Intervention Model	Year 3 Implementation of Selected Intervention Model	
<b>Newly Identified Priority Schools (25 schools)</b>			Year 1 Implementation of Selected Intervention Model	Year 2 Implementation of Selected Intervention Model	Year 3 Implementation of Selected Intervention Model	

ADE in collaboration with the LEA will ensure that all priority schools are implementing meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles no later than the 2014–2015 school year.

**2.D.v Provide the criteria the SEA will use to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement exits priority status and a justification for the criteria selected.**

**Figure 2D.i Exit Criteria – Focus and Priority Labels**



The exit criteria used to evaluate whether a school has improved in the areas qualifying it for a focus or priority label correspond with the reason for identification. The exit criteria require a school to demonstrate it no longer meets the entry criteria as well as demonstrating improvement in student achievement or graduation rate. Stakeholder feedback identified the complexities of exit criteria for the former system to identify Reward, Focus, and Priority as an area for improvement. The exit criteria going forward emphasizes a collective focus on moving Arizona students forward and assigns responsibility to every school in doing so.

Although new focus criteria will allow a school to exit annually, the criteria are rigorous enough so that the school must show evidence that the conditions within the school have improved to the extent it no longer meets any criteria which would identify the school as Focus. The additional condition for Focus Low Achievement and Focus Within School Gap require unequivocal evidence that the school's lowest achieving students can no longer be considered amongst the lowest achieving in the state as well. While the scale score at the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile on the former statewide

assessment may have corresponded with proficiency rates using an instrument which measured lower standards, a Focus school must provide sufficient evidence that their lowest achieving students are not also trending negatively when compared to their peers statewide.

Schools which have been implementing for three years or more at the conclusion of the 2014-2015 school year may exit Priority or Focus status if their 2014-2015 student achievement and academic outcomes data meet the exit criteria outlined in Figure 2D.i. In February 2016, the Department expects to have the necessary data from the 2014-2015 AzMERIT test administration to identify schools which do not meet the new criteria to qualify for the respective labels. If the number of schools which exit in February 2016 brings the number of schools served to less than 5% of all Title I schools, the Department will not replace these exited schools with new schools based on 2014-2015 data. The Department will ensure that any Priority schools which close operations do not affect the obligation to support a minimum of 5% of Title I schools.

In June of 2016, the determination of which schools may exit after implementing Priority interventions for at least three years will include 2015-2016 student achievement data. This timeline assumes receipt of assessment data returns to a normal cycle in the second year; however, there is no expectation that the assessment cycle would impact Priority Low Graduation Rate schools eligible to exit.

~~To exit Priority status, a school must meet rigorous criteria, depending on the reason for being in Priority status:~~

- ~~● Schools designated as a Priority School because of achievement will need to meet the following criteria to exit Priority status: SIG schools, and those among the lowest performing schools ('F' schools and low performing 'D' schools) must maintain a letter grade of C or better for two consecutive years and have at least 50% of students passing AIMS or show at least a 10 percent increase in the percent of students passing AIMS each year.~~
- ~~● Schools in Priority Status due to a low graduation rate must demonstrate growth by meeting the following criteria:~~
  - ~~○ Schools with a graduation rate below 50% must meet a graduation rate of 60% and have an annual increase of 2% for 2 consecutive years.~~
  - ~~○ Schools with a graduation rate above 50% must meet a graduation rate of 70% and have an annual increase of 2% for 2 consecutive years.~~

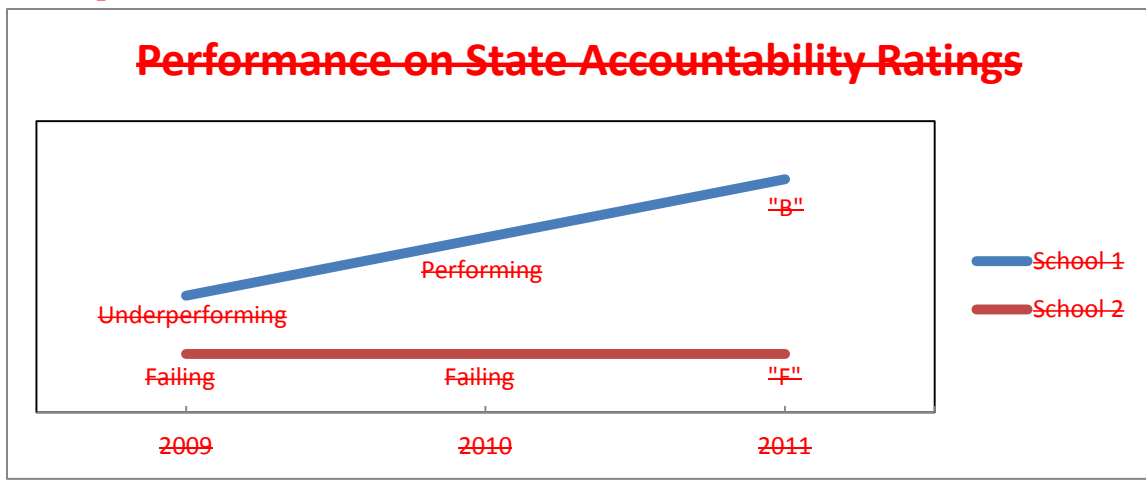
~~Even if these goals are obtained there must be a minimum of three years of intervention implementation. Furthermore, if a school exits Priority status but has an individual subgroup(s) that has not met AMOs the LEA will be responsible for ensuring that the school continues to address the academic improvement of the specific subgroup(s) as part of the school's continuous improvement plan until AMOs are met. The LEA will continue to be monitored by ADE's School Improvement and Intervention Section while addressing the needs of the individual subgroup(s).~~

~~To demonstrate that Arizona's proposed exit criteria for SIG and low performing Priority Schools are rigorous and result in significant progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps, two example schools were examined. Both schools were identified in the first cohort of Arizona's first "Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools" program and both are elementary schools of similar enrollment size and demographics. To be identified as a Persistently Lowest~~



Achieving School, both schools had displayed a history of poor academic performance. Both received an accountability rating under the AZLearns Legacy system that was among the poorest ratings (see Figure 2.7). In 2009, Example School 1 received an “Underperforming” label, and Example School 2 received a “Failing to meet academic standards” label. At this point, the schools were both identified as “PLA” schools.

**Figure 2.7: Performance on State Accountability Ratings for Two Example Schools in School Improvement**



Over the course of the subsequent 2 years, these schools showed dramatically different trajectories. Example School 1 made substantially more progress implementing the 7 Turnaround Principles than Example School 2. Example School 1 also displayed steady academic gains, progressively improving their accountability rating. Specifically, as shown in Table 2.13a, Example School 1 showed higher overall student achievement and growth, and greater growth in their bottom quartile subgroup than Example School 2.

In a review of intervention ratings by ADE School Improvement program monitors, Example School 1 also earned higher overall ratings on the seven Turnaround Principles than Example School 2. All in all, Example School 1 displayed the gains necessary to earn a “C”.

**Table 2.13a: Comparison of Student Performance and Progress in Two Example Schools in School Improvement**

Criteria	School 1	School 2
A-F Growth Points	73	23
SGP, Bottom Quartile	72.5	24
A-F Composite Points	47	14
A-F Total Points	120	37
Percent of Students Passing AIMS 2009	36	27
Percent of Students Passing AIMS 2011	44	14
Percent Change in Students Passing AIMS	+22%	-48%

Though data supporting the maintenance of a “C” for 2 years will not be available until July 2012, the trajectory of Example School 1 clearly shows that the fundamental changes necessary to attain a “C” were rigorous, yet attainable. However, Example School 2 did not show adequate academic success to attain a “C” and this is reflective of their lack of progress implementing the Turnaround Principles and lack of improvement in their students’ academics. This brief comparison demonstrates that a school’s ability to earn a “C” and thereby become eligible to exit Priority or Focus Status is dependent on effective implementation of interventions which in turn support improvements in student achievement and in reducing achievement gaps.

## 2.E FOCUS SCHOOLS

**2.E.i** Describe the SEA’s methodology for identifying a number of low-performing schools equal to at least 10 percent of the State’s Title I schools as “focus schools.” If the SEA’s methodology is not based on the definition of focus schools in *ESEA Flexibility* (but instead, e.g., based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), the SEA should also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department’s “Demonstrating that an SEA’s Lists of Schools meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions” guidance.

Section 2.A. for a description of the full methodology used to identify a Focus school statewide.

The method for identifying Focus Schools is concentrated around achievement gaps and low graduation rates (see Table 2.14a). We begin with Title I schools receiving a “D” grade and graduation rates less than 60%. Next, the remaining schools with graduation rates less than 60% not already a Priority School is included. Consistent with the identification of Tier II Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools in 2009 and 2010, Title I eligible high schools that met the original School Improvement Grant Exception policy below are not included in this criteria.

**SIG Exception Policy:** Schools identified as credit recovery were not included on the list. To be identified as credit recovery, a school had to have met the State Board’s definition of an alternative school, and to have identified itself through its publicly posted mission statement on its school report card as a credit recovery school.

ADE is proposing to apply the same Exception policy to our Low Graduation Rate Focus Schools. ADE will update the implementation by requiring schools to apply for an exception and submit their most recent mission statement demonstrating compliance. A more rigorous definition of alternative schools has been approved by the SBE as well as an application process. The ADE will then use this list of approved alternative schools to release a new list of Focus Schools.

Table 2.14 shows the number of Title I schools, not identified as a Priority School, with a graduation rate of less than 60% for 3 years by Letter Grade. For the most current data available, there were 44 Alternative high schools and 8 traditional high schools with a graduation rate less than 60% for 3 years. Among the traditional schools, all those with a graduation rate of less than 60% for 3 years earned a ‘D’, or were ungraded in 2011, whereas more than half of the alternative schools earned a ‘C’, and 4 earned a ‘D’.

**Table 2.14: Number of Title I Schools with Less than 60% Graduation Rate in 2008, 2009, and 2010 by Letter Grades**

Letter Grade	Traditional School
A	0
B	0
C	0
D	6
Ungraded	2*
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>

\*These schools were included for demonstration purposes, but did not receive a letter grade in the 2011 pilot year, because of their school size and type. In the final identification, all schools will receive a letter grade using the approved A-F Letter Grade models and will potentially be eligible. The remaining Focus Schools are those with the largest achievement gaps, using two criteria. First, schools with a low achieving subgroup *and* with among the lowest progress in the percent of the bottom quartile students passing AIMS were identified. For this calculation, we consider any Title I school that meets the gap criterion, not just schools with a ‘D’ letter grade. Next, schools were identified with the largest within-school achievement gaps and who had among the lowest progress in the percent of their bottom quartile students passing AIMS. Again, any Title I school that met this criterion was eligible, not just ‘D’ schools.

The alternative schools A-F Letter Grade model does not include a component for bottom quartile students because of the frequent mobility of their students and that many do not have consecutive test records which are required for the identification of a student as being among the bottom quartile. Thus, for alternative schools, the within-school gap was not applicable and a low achieving subgroup was needed that better reflected the mission and population served by alternative schools. The alternative schools A-F Letter Grade model does focus on how well schools are helping students progress to proficiency and beyond. Thus, determination for this group is based on the State Board adopted Alternative School A-F Letter Grade model. Furthermore, the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools adopted targets for alternative schools specifically for academic improvement of non-proficient students.

The determination for this group will be schools below the “Meets Standards” cut point in mathematics or in reading according to the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools ratings. Schools that do not “Meet Standard” are those with fewer than 45% of non-proficient students in reading improving by at least one performance level or with fewer than 30% of non-proficient students in mathematics improving by at least one performance level. ADE is prepared to facilitate the implementation of interventions with any newly identified Focus Schools to begin immediately after notification for the 2013-2014 school year.

**Focus School Definition Summary:**~~A “low-graduation-rate” Focus School (H):~~

- ~~1. Title I participating high school;~~
- ~~2. Have had a 4-year cohort graduation rate of less than 60% for 3 consecutive years over a number of years; not including alternative schools that meet Arizona’s original School Improvement Grant Exception policy;~~
- ~~3. Not be identified as a priority school.~~

~~A “within-school-gaps” Focus School (F):~~

- ~~1. Title I school;~~
- ~~2. Have the largest gaps (greater than 65% difference in the percent passing) within the school between the percent of bottom quartile students passing AIMS in reading and mathematics and the top 2 quartiles of students passing AIMS on the most current year of data;~~
- ~~3. Have had less than 21 percentage point increase over the most recent 2 years in the percent of bottom quartile students passing AIMS~~

~~A “low-achieving-subgroup” Focus School (G):~~

- ~~1. Title I school;~~
- ~~2. Have less than 25% of their bottom quartile students passing AIMS in reading and mathematics on the most current year of data;~~
- ~~3. Have had less than 21 percentage point increase over the most recent 2 years in the percent of bottom quartile students passing AIMS~~

~~An “alternative low-achieving-subgroup” Focus School:~~

- ~~1. Title I school~~
- ~~2. Approved ADE Alternative School~~
- ~~3. In 2010, 2011 AND 2012, less than 45% of non-proficient students in reading improved by at least one AIMS performance level or~~
- ~~4. In 2010, 2011 AND 2012, less than 30% of non-proficient students in mathematics improved by at least one AIMS performance level~~

The current list of Focus schools being submitted in this renewal reflects the former methodology. The revised table reflects the most current numbers of Focus schools after the former Exit criteria have been applied.

**Table: Focus Schools Criteria and Number of Schools Identified**

<b>Focus Criteria</b>	<b>Number of Schools</b>
Total Title I Schools	1210
10% of Title I Schools required to be identified as Priority	121
<b>Exited Schools</b> +These are Focus schools that have met the relevant criteria for exiting school improvement due to the priority label.	6
<b>Low Graduation Rate (H)</b> +Title I participating high school with 4-year cohort graduation rate less than 60% for 3 consecutive years (credit recovery alternative schools not included in this criteria)	8

<b>Low Bottom Quartile (“low achieving subgroup”) (G)</b> + Among the fewest bottom Quartile students passing AIMS, and + Lack of progress in percent of bottom Quartile students passing AIMS from 2013 to 2014	59
<b>Within-School Gap (F)</b> + Among the greatest difference between the Bottom Quartile and Top 2 Quartiles of students passing AIMS, and + Lack of progress in percent of bottom Quartile students passing AIMS	
<b>Low Bottom Quartile (“low achieving subgroup”) (G) and Within-School Gap (F)</b>	49
<b>March 2015 Total Focus Schools</b>	<b>122</b>

**Table 2.14a: Focus Schools Criteria and Number of Schools Identified**

<b>Category of Focus Schools</b>	<b>Number of Schools*</b>
<b>Total number of Title I schools</b>	<b>1,210</b>
<b>Total number of schools required to be identified as Focus Schools</b>	<b>121</b>
<del>Title I high schools with graduation rate &lt; 60% (H)**</del>	<del>27</del>
<del>Title I schools with the greatest within-school gaps* (F)</del>	<del>44</del>
<del>Title I schools with low achievement among their bottom quartile* (G)</del>	<del>49</del>

\*The number of schools listed here are unduplicated counts, though schools can qualify for Focus School status under more than one category. For complete list of schools and what category each qualified under, see Table 2.

\*\*The number of schools identified here does not include those Alternative Schools that meet Arizona’s original School Improvement Grant Exception policy.

\*Schools labeled under the “Small Schools” formula were excluded from this part of the calculation. Because that formula uses 3 years of pooled AIMS data, the gap analysis and percent passing among the bottom quartile were not valid to directly compare to the traditional model. These schools were, however, included in the graduation rate criterion.

**2.E.ii Provide the SEA’s list of focus schools in Table 2.**

See Attachment Table 2 – Priority and Focus.

**2.E.iii Describe the process and timeline the SEA will use to ensure that its LEAs that have one or more focus schools will identify the specific needs of the SEA’s focus schools and their students and provide examples of and justifications for the interventions focus schools will be required to implement to improve the performance of students who are the furthest behind.**

Focus schools are unique in that they may not require whole school reform measures, rather school

interventions that focus on low achieving subgroups not making progress and achievement gaps between high achieving and low achieving subgroups in the school. As with whole school reform efforts for priority schools, ADE believes the entry point for systemic and sustainable targeted reform efforts at the school level is at the LEA.

Currently 41% of the focus schools in Arizona are charter schools. As with priority schools, ADE is committed to fully and effectively serving these focus school charters in the school improvement and intervention process

LEAs with focus schools that have not made sufficient progress to exit focus status after three years must increase the rigor of interventions aligned to the reason for identification and supports in these schools. In order to ensure that implementation of more rigorous interventions are focused on the root causes for not making sufficient progress, address the reason for identification and lead to exiting focus status, ADE will conduct a solutions team review of LEAs with focus schools focused on the current state of implementation of the interventions identified in the LEA and School Continuous Improvement Plans. These findings will assist the LEA in determining gaps in implementation of the turnaround interventions as well as the more rigorous interventions that must be implemented. ADE will assist the LEA in identifying and developing interventions that will specifically address data gaps and root causes as well as assure that every focus school will implement more rigorous interventions. LEAs with focus schools that have not met the exit criteria must address these interventions in the LEA and School Continuous Improvement Plans. Consistent with A.R.S §15-241 (K), LEAs with focus schools that have not met the exit criteria after three years will be required to inform their school community and local school board of their solutions team findings and how they intend to address the findings.

LEAs with focus schools that have not met the exit criteria after three years will also receive more intensive support and monitoring from the ADE. Section 2.G describes ADE's Differentiated System of Support for priority and focus schools. This year ADE will be piloting the Aligning Efforts: Integrated Support Model in LEA's with priority and focus schools that have been implementing interventions for over three years and have not met the exit criteria. These schools will receive more intense and aligned support from all of the program areas at the agency such as ESS, OELAS, K12 Standards, Title I, Highly Effective Teachers and Leaders as well as the Support and Innovation Unit. The level of support these schools will receive will be significantly focused and require individual schools and the district to commit to a series of assurances that demonstrate their willingness and capacity to engage in turnaround reforms. LEA's with focus schools will receive specific support aligned to their reason for identification.

In addition, ESS grants for team training in examining data to improve student achievement (EDISA) will target LEAs with focus schools that have not met the exit criteria. This invitation-only grant will support five staff members from each identified LEA to participate in the team-training program. Each team will develop a dynamic, sustainable action plan outlining the application of evidence-based practices to be implemented during the school year. An additional grant will be available to those LEAs that have an approved plan to assist in its implementation.

Finally, LEAs with focus schools that continue to not make sufficient progress and exit priority status four years of intervention ADE may consider other options identified in A.R.S §15-241 (V-Z).

### *Continuous Improvement Plans*

All LEAs in Arizona receiving Title I funds are required to submit an annual LEA and School Continuous Improvement Plan. ADE will implement the same Continuous Improvement Planning Process used for priority schools (described in priority section 2D.iii) for LEAs with focus schools. ADE will provide technical assistance and collaborate with LEA's in any and all aspects of the school improvement planning process for focus schools. LEAs with focus schools must assure that the continuous improvement plan is fully aligned to the needs of the school, addresses the root causes for not making progress, addresses the reason for identification, and addresses the selected interventions aligned to the turnaround principles. The plan must be appropriate for the different levels of schools (elementary, middle, and high) as well as different types of student needs.

LEAs with focus schools will be expected to address the needs of specific subgroups, particularly bottom quartile, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and the lowest-achieving students by identifying annual performance targets and ~~a minimum of three~~ milestones for each of the applicable subgroups for each focus school in mathematics, reading and/or graduation rate for each of the three years. These targets and milestones must be established using baseline data, achievable as well as rigorous, and set to close achievement and performance gaps. LEAs with focus schools will also be required to identify annual performance targets and ~~a minimum of three~~ milestones for all students in mathematics, reading and/or graduation rate for each of the three years. All performance targets must be aligned to the reason for identification and needs assessment findings and are likely to result in the focus school meeting the exit criteria. ~~In addition, LEAs will be required to identify annual performance targets and a minimum of two milestones for each focus school for the following two leading indicators: non-academic school environment data and instructional data.~~ The annual performance targets will be identified in the schools continuous improvement plan as school-wide goals. ADE support teams will work collaboratively with LEAs and school(s) to develop meaningful detailed performance targets for low-performing subgroups to include timelines, in order to meet school improvement exit criteria.

~~Prior to selecting an intervention model and completing the model template, LEAs with focus schools will submit an annual Self-Readiness Assessment (SRA). The SRA is designed to engage the school community in an in-depth evaluation of the seven turnaround principles and must be completed by a team of stakeholders. Primary concerns, successes, and root causes will be identified and action steps necessary to either maintain successes or address concerns will be recorded. The SRA's findings are intended to direct the school's improvement plan development and the LEA's strategies and action steps to support the implementation of the comprehensive intervention plan aligned to the appropriate turnaround principles. Additionally, the SRA serves to guide ADE's feedback and technical assistance for LEAs and schools in focus status.~~

ADE fully expects research-based improvement strategies to be described in the continuous improvement plans, and reviews both the LEA's and focus school's plans to ensure strategies include interventions aligned to the turnaround principles that are most likely to improve the performance of the students who are furthest behind. Each plan must include the specific action steps the school will take to implement each of its identified improvement strategies with fidelity.

### *Interventions Aligned to the Turnaround Principles*



LEAs with focus schools are required to select appropriate interventions aligned to the turnaround principles (described in priority section 2D.iii) to develop and implement a comprehensive improvement plan that adequately addresses the reason why a school has been identified as a focus school, ensures the academic needs of students in each of the subgroups in the school are met and ensures the focus school has the greatest probability of closing the identified achievement gaps. LEAs must use data to determine which of the turnaround principles most closely align to the reason for identification. While LEAs with focus schools will have discretion on which turnaround interventions to implement that address the reason for identification, all focus schools must implement interventions aligned to principle (v): using data to inform instruction for continuous improvement and providing time for collaboration on the use of data. **Focus schools will be required to implement interventions at a minimum of one year before meeting exit criteria. Focus schools that do not meet exit criteria will be required to continue implementation.** ADE will provide LEAs with focus schools technical assistance in identifying and appropriate interventions.

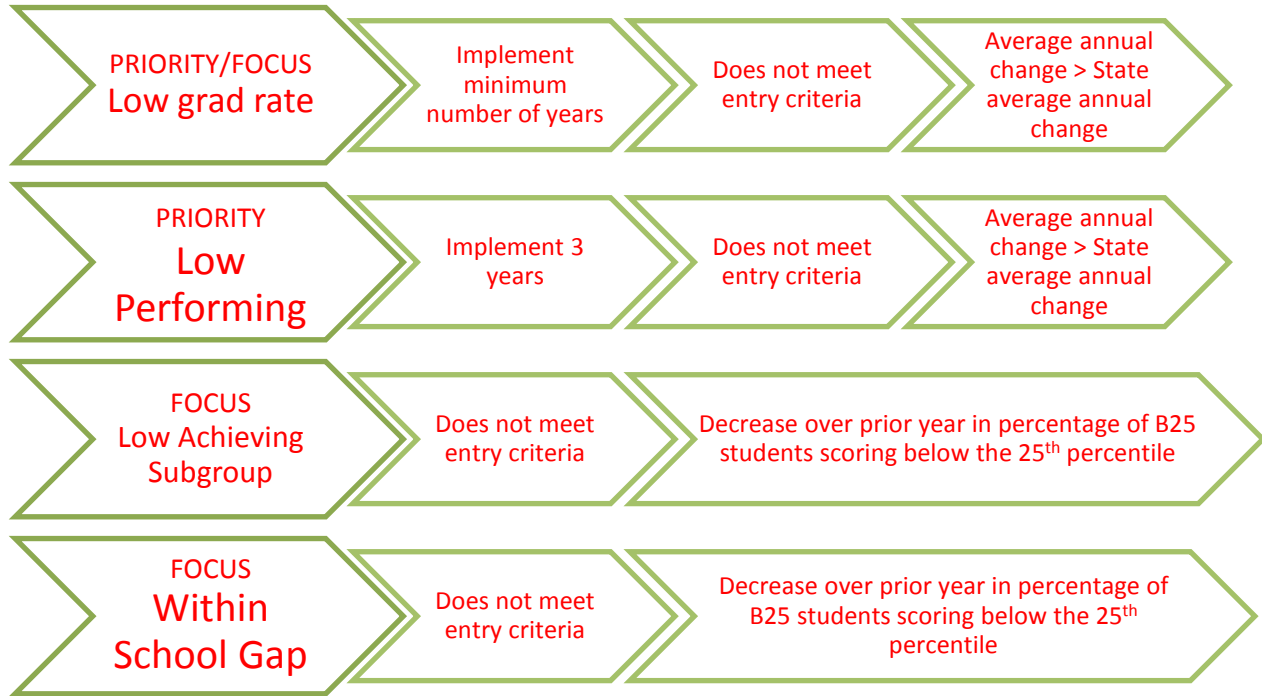
ADE is confident that interventions aligned with the turnaround principles, when implemented with fidelity, will have a significant impact on student learning as well as staff practices. These prescriptive interventions approach leadership, assessment, curriculum, data, and school climate in a format that allows for differentiation for different levels of schools (elementary, middle, high) and the different types of school needs (e.g., all-students, targeted at the lowest-achieving students). ADE will hold LEAs with focus schools accountable for effective implementation of selected interventions aligned the turnaround principles. Interventions must address the focus schools reason for identification and will be monitored by ADE and the LEA to ensure that focus schools are effectively improving the performance of low-performing students and reducing achievement gaps among subgroups, including English Learners and students with disabilities.

### ***Template for Interventions Aligned with Turnaround Principles***

Attachment 2.E contains the intervention template each LEA must complete **in the ADE grants management system as part of their school improvement grant application** for their focus schools based on which interventions aligned to the turnaround principles the LEA intends to implement. The template will be used as a guide to ensure that the appropriate turnaround principles have been addressed including using data to inform instruction. ~~The template for focus schools will become part of the LEA's and school's Continuous Improvement Plan and will be submitted to ADE through ALEAT.~~

**2.E.iv Provide the criteria the SEA will use to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps exits focus status and a justification for the criteria selected.**

**Figure 2E.i Exit Criteria for New Focus and Priority Labels**



The exit criteria used to evaluate whether a school has improved in the areas qualifying it for a focus or priority label correspond with the reason for identification. The exit criteria require a school to demonstrate it no longer meets the entry criteria as well as demonstrating improvement in student achievement or graduation rate. Stakeholder feedback identified the complexities of exit criteria for the former system to identify Reward, Focus, and Priority as an area for improvement. The exit criteria going forward emphasizes a collective focus on moving Arizona students forward and assigns responsibility to every school in doing so.

Although new focus criteria will allow a school to exit annually, the criteria are rigorous enough so that the school must show evidence that the conditions within the school have improved to the extent it no longer meets any criteria which would identify the school as Focus. The additional condition for Focus Low Achievement and Focus Within School Gap require unequivocal evidence that the school's lowest achieving students can no longer be considered amongst the lowest achieving in the state as well. While the scale score at the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile on the former statewide assessment may have corresponded with proficiency rates using an instrument which measured lower standards, a Focus school must provide sufficient evidence that their lowest achieving students are not also trending negatively when compared to their peers statewide.

~~To exit Focus status, a school must meet rigorous criteria, depending on the reason for being in Focus status. See section 2.D.iv for a discussion of the rigor of these criteria:~~

- ~~● Schools in Focus status due to a low graduation rate must demonstrate growth by meeting the following criteria:
 
  - ~~○ Schools with a graduation rate below 50% must meet a graduation rate of 60% and have an annual increase of 2% for 2 consecutive years.~~
  - ~~○ Schools with a graduation rate above 50% must meet a graduation rate of 70% and have an annual increase of 2% for 2 consecutive years.~~~~
- ~~● Schools with low performing subgroups and largest within school achievement gaps must show growth among their bottom quartile students by reaching an SGP for the bottom quartile of 50 and increased the percent of bottom quartile students passing AIMS by 11%. This represents an SGP that is 12 percentiles higher than the current average for Focus Schools. The increase in percent of students in the bottom quartile passing AIMS represents half of the difference between the average for Focus Schools and Title I non-Focus Schools. These criteria are rigorous for these schools, yet represent attainable goals and necessary to show improvement among their lowest performing students.~~
- ~~● Alternative schools with low performing subgroups must show improvement in the performance and growth of their non-proficient students by reaching a minimum rate of 50% of non-proficient students in reading improving by at least one AIMS proficiency level, and reaching a minimum rate of 35% or greater of non-proficient students in mathematics improving by at least one AIMS proficiency level. Because schools will continue to receive intervention and support for three years, these rates must be reached at some point within the three years, but also, schools must maintain or show an increase in these rates each year of intervention. That is, to exit focus status, in each of the most recent three years of intervention, the rate of non-proficient students improving by at least one AIMS proficiency level must be higher than the year prior in both mathematics and in reading.~~

~~Even if these goals are obtained, there must be a minimum of three years of intervention implementation. Furthermore, if a school exits Focus Status but has an individual subgroup(s) that has not met AMOs or for high schools not improving the graduation rate, the LEA will be responsible for ensuring that the school continues to address the academic improvement of the specific subgroup(s) as part of the school's continuous improvement plan until AMOs are met. The LEA will continue to be monitored by ADE's School Improvement and Intervention Section while addressing the needs of the individual subgroup(s).~~

Research on systems implementation would support that this sustained growth will not only lead to a reduced learning gap for the lowest achieving students, but also create systems to continuously evaluate student achievement (most sustained efforts do not exist without structural change). Through this continual process of evaluating student achievement and growth over the two consecutive years, the LEA will have created systems that are better able to adapt to the changing needs of their students to continue producing positive, sustained results.

**TABLE 2: PRELIMINARY REWARD, PRIORITY, AND FOCUS SCHOOLS**

Provide the SEA's list of reward, priority, and focus schools using the Table 2 template. Use the key to indicate the criteria used to identify a school as a reward, priority, or focus school.

<del>Redacted School ID</del>	<del>REWARD SCHOOL</del>	<del>PRIORITY SCHOOL</del>	<del>FOCUS SCHOOL</del>
5		E	
8	A		
13	A		
14	A		
15	B		
16		D-2	
19			G
21		E	
24	A		
26	A		
27		E	
28		*	
30	*		
32	A		
33	A		
34	*		
35	A		
36	A		
38	A		
39			H
40			H
41	*		
42		*	
43		E	
44	A		
48	A		
49	A		
50	A		
51	A		
52	*		
53	A		
55	B		
57	A		
60			G

<del>Redacted School ID</del>	<del>REWARD SCHOOL</del>	<del>PRIORITY SCHOOL</del>	<del>FOCUS SCHOOL</del>
64	*		
64	A		
69	*		
70	A		
79	*		
80	*		
81	A		
82	*		
83		E	
84	A		
85	A		
86			G
87	A,B		
88			H
89			H
90			H
91	A		
92	A		
93	A		
94		E	
95	B		
96	A		
98	*		
99		E	
101	A		
102	*		
103			H
104	A		
105		E,C	
106		E	
107		D-1,E	
111			H
112		*	
113		D-2	
117	B		
120	*		
121	*		
123	*		

<del>Redacted School ID</del>	<del>REWARD SCHOOL</del>	<del>PRIORITY SCHOOL</del>	<del>FOCUS SCHOOL</del>
130		E	
131		E	
132		E	
133			H
134		E	
135	*		
136		D-2	
142	A		
143	A		
144	A		
145	A		
146	A		
147		E,C	
148		D-1, E, C	
149	A		
150			H
151			H
152			H
153			H
154			H
155			H
156			H
157	A		
161		*	
162		E	
163		E,C	
165			H
167		D-1, C	
168	A		
169	A		
170	B		
171		E	
172		E,C	
174			H
175		E	
176			H
177	A		
179	*		

<del>Redacted School ID</del>	<del>REWARD SCHOOL</del>	<del>PRIORITY SCHOOL</del>	<del>FOCUS SCHOOL</del>
180	A		
181	A		
182	A		
183		E	
184	A		
185	A		
193		E	
194			H
196	*		
197		E	
198		E	
199			H
200		D-1	
201			H
202		E	
203			H
204			H
205			H
206			H
207			H
208		D-1	
209	A		
210	A, B		
211			H
212			H
213			H
214			H
215	B		
216			H
217			H
218			H
220		E	
221			H
222	A		
223	A		
224			H
226		D-2	
228		E	



Redacted School ID	REWARD SCHOOL	PRIORITY SCHOOL	FOCUS SCHOOL
230	A		
231	A		
232			H
233			G,H
234	A		
235			H
236	A		
237	*		
238		E	
239			H
240	A		
241		*	
243			H
244	*		
246		E	
247		E	
248		E	
253			H
254		D-1,E	
255		D-1,C	
257		D-1,E	
258		D-2	
260	A		
261			H
262	A		
263	A		
264		D-1,E	
265	*		
266		E	
267			H
269		D-2	
270		E	
271			H
272		E	
273		D-2	
274	*		
275		D-2	
276		D-2	

Redacted School ID	REWARD SCHOOL	PRIORITY SCHOOL	FOCUS SCHOOL
277			H
278		E	
279		E	
280	A		
281	A		
282	A		
283		E	
284	A		
285			H
286			H
287			H
289	B		
291			H
292		E	
293	B		
295	*		
297		D-2	
298	*		
299	*		
300	*		
301			H
302		D-2	
303		E	
305		D-1, E	
306	A		
308		*	
309	A		
310	A		
311		E	
312	*		
313	A		
314		E	
315		E	
316	A		
317	A		
318		*	
319			H
320			H

Redacted School ID	REWARD SCHOOL	PRIORITY SCHOOL	FOCUS SCHOOL
321			G
322			G
323			G
324			G
325			G
326			G
327			G
328			G
329			G
330			G
331			G
332			G
333			G
334			G
335			G
336			G
337			G
338			G
339			G
340			G
341			G
342			G
343			G
344			G
345			G
346			G
347			G
348			G
349			G
350			G
351			G
352			G
353			G
354			G
355			G
356			F,G
357			F,G
358			F,G

<del>Redacted School ID</del>	<del>REWARD SCHOOL</del>	<del>PRIORITY SCHOOL</del>	<del>FOCUS SCHOOL</del>
359			F,G
360			F,G
361			F,G
362			F,G
363			F,G
364			F,G
365			F,G
366			F,G
367			F,G
368			F,G
369			F,G
370			F,G
371			F,G
372			F,G
373			F,G
374			F,G
375			F,G
376			F,G
377			F,G
378			F,G
379			F,G
380			F,G
381			F,G
382			F,G
383			F,G
384			F
385			F
386			F
387			F
388			F
389			F
390			F
391			F
392			F
393			F
394			F
395			F
396			F

<del>Redacted School ID</del>	<del>REWARD SCHOOL</del>	<del>PRIORITY SCHOOL</del>	<del>FOCUS SCHOOL</del>
397			F
398			F
399			F
400			F
401			F
402			F
403			F
<b>Total Number of Uniquely Identified Schools</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>138</b>

\*These schools were not also identified using USED demonstration guidance. See Appendix 2A for full demonstration of Arizona meeting USED's guidance for identification of Reward and Priority Schools.

**Total # of Title I schools in the State: 1,210**

**Total # of Title I participating high schools in the State with graduation rates less than 60%: 62 (14**

Traditional, 48 Alternative); of these 62 schools, 10 were identified as Priority Schools for another criteria than low graduation rate. These 10 schools, listed here with Key 'D-1' were not included in the count of low graduation rate schools in the Priority School section because they were already identified using other criteria. ADE only included Title I eligible high schools with low graduation rate in the Priority Schools category count. These schools were not included as Focus Schools because they were already identified as Priority Schools. The remaining 52 schools with graduation rate of less than 60% were included as Focus Schools, outlined in section 2.E.i.

### Key

#### **Reward School Criteria:**

- A.** Highest performing school
- B.** High progress school

#### **Priority School Criteria:**

- C.** Among the lowest five percent of Title I schools in the State based on the proficiency and lack of progress of the "all students" group
- D-1.** Title I participating high school with graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years
- D-2.** Title I eligible high school with graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years
- E.** Tier I or Tier II SIG school implementing a school intervention model

#### **Focus School Criteria:**

- F.** Has the largest within-school gaps between the highest achieving subgroup(s) and the lowest achieving subgroup(s) or, at the high school level, has the largest within-school gaps in the graduation rate
- G.** Has a subgroup or subgroups with low achievement or, at the high school level, a low graduation rate
- H.** A Title I participating high school with graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years that is not identified as a priority school

Arizona is submitting a preliminary, redacted list of Reward, Priority, and Focus Schools. For

~~demonstration purposes, these schools were identified using the methodology detailed in sections 2.C., 2.D., and 2.E. of this application. The final list of schools will be identified using the 2011-2012 assessment results and A-F Letter Grade determinations. The 2011-2012 A-F Letter Grades will be released to the public on July 25, 2012 at which time Arizona can make final Reward, Priority, and Focus School determinations.~~

## 2.F PROVIDE INCENTIVES AND SUPPORTS FOR OTHER TITLE I SCHOOLS

**2.F...Describe how the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system will provide incentives and supports to ensure continuous improvement in other Title I schools that, based on the SEA’s new AMOs and other measures, are not making progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps, and an explanation of how these incentives and supports are likely to improve student achievement and school performance, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for student support for All Title I Schools**

In order to identify the Title I schools most at risk for becoming a Priority or Focus school ADE will be revising the originally approved pre-intervention criteria. In June of 2016 ADE will apply the newly approved RFP criteria statewide. This will allow ADE to capture all of the Title I schools that meet the Priority and Focus criteria. From this list ADE will identify 5% of the Title I schools for Priority Status and 10% of the Title I schools for Focus Status. The remaining Title I schools that meet the Priority or Focus criteria will then be identified as either ~~pre-At-Risk Priority~~ priority or ~~pre-focus-At-Risk Focus~~ schools. At-Risk Priority and At-Risk Focus schools will receive a range of supports aligned to their reason for identification. ADE will support and hold accountable LEAs with At-Risk schools and LEAs will be expected to support At-Risk schools.

During the transition, ADE is committed to holding schools accountable and identifying low performing schools in accordance with the priority and focus criteria. Arizona’s identification of At-Risk Priority and At-Risk Focus schools will capture the schools that miss AMOs or graduation rate targets, or both. In order to capture the most at-risk Title I schools, for the 2015-2016 school year, ADE will use 2014 data to identify the At-Risk Priority and At-Risk Focus schools in addition to the list that was generated to identify the Priority and Focus schools for Table 2 (based on 2014 data) and will identify the remaining schools as next 5% of Priority schools as pre-priority At-Risk Priority and the next 5% of Focus schools as pre-focus or At-Risk Focus schools. This will ensure that the Title I schools most at-risk of Priority or Focus status are being held accountable and receiving the necessary supports from ADE.

ADE’s differentiated recognition and support system provides incentives for Title I LEAs and schools to continuously improve student achievement by providing more flexibility and local control to those LEAs and schools not identified as Priority or Focus Schools but that demonstrate the greatest downward trend in their student’s academic achievement, student growth, or graduation rate will be required to amend their continuous improvement plans to address the reasons for identification.

LEAs with At-Risk Priority or At-Risk Focus schools will be required to address their specific reason for identification with specific interventions in their LEA and School Continuous Improvement Plans. ADE will annually review the LEA and School Continuous Improvement Plans for implementation of these interventions and will provide targeted on-site and desk-top support as needed.



Additionally, a subset of these schools will also be alerted to Pre-Intervention status. This approach allows ADE to differentiate between schools that are improving and demonstrating a positive trajectory and those that are headed in the wrong direction.

The data on other Title I schools, i.e., non-Priority or non-Focus Schools indicate that students are not performing to expectations, not making desired academic progress, or there are achievement concerns for subgroups. Given these concerns, the factors that will be considered in requiring schools to amend their continuous improvement plans and in the identification of Pre-Intervention Schools using 2010-2011 school year data as the baseline year will include:

1. AMOs, specifically
  - A school with any single subgroup missing AMOs for 2 or more consecutive years
  - A school with the total number of subgroups missing the AMO targets in the current year being greater than 50% of the school's eligible number of subgroups
2. Academic Growth, specifically
  - Negative growth in the percent of students passing AIMS over 2 years
  - Schools with less than 50% of students passing AIMS over 2 years that have less than 5% improvement annually in the percent of students passing AIMS
  - SGP of bottom quartile students below 1 standard deviation for 2 years
3. Graduation rates, specifically
  - High schools that do not meet graduation AMOs

LEAs with At-Risk Priority or At-Risk Focus Title I schools, which includes those that do not meet graduation AMOs, must set aside Title I funds, using funds previously set aside for SES/School Choice, to support the interventions that are identified in the revised Continuous Improvement Plan.

These schools will be eligible for directed but less intensive supports than Focus or Priority Schools. The Title I Section and the School Improvement and Intervention Section (SII) have begun to more closely align supports for all Title I LEAs and schools through strengthening its Differentiated System of Support for Arizona Schools, as further described in Section 2 G. Building the capacity of the LEA to support all of its schools with specific attention to those in At-Risk Priority or At-Risk Focus Pre-Intervention status is the explicit intent of the Differentiated System of Support for Arizona Schools. When a school is identified as a Pre-Intervention School At-Risk Priority or At-Risk Focus school, the ADE's assigned LEA Education Program Specialist will provide expertise that most closely aligns with the specific student needs for the school, including revising the school's Continuous Improvement Plan and ensuring that fiscal resources, especially Title I, are reallocated by the LEA to support improvement efforts. Title I program and fiscal requirements form the structure of compliance monitoring that all Title I LEAs undergo but includes a more critical review of LEAs with schools in At-Risk Priority or At-Risk Focus Pre-Intervention status.

These efforts include technical assistance, professional development, and progress monitoring, in addition to compliance monitoring. Technical assistance includes training on the features of ALEAT, the state's web-based planning and monitoring application, and access to other web-based tools for continuous improvement. Professional development, delivered in a combination of face-

to-face and e-learning formats, comprises the continuous improvement process, including the aspects of developing and writing quality LEA and school plans. All Title I schools must develop a Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) that is reviewed and revised annually under the direction of the LEA (see below), and those meeting the **Priority or Focus** criteria listed above must amend their plans to address the reasons for identification. ~~ADE will identify LEAs with schools as Pre-Intervention Schools up to a maximum of 10% and ADE will provide additional professional development specifically to address how the CIP must be revised to include those specific interventions that are proven to be effective in addressing the reason(s) for identification. that address the downward trend that led to Pre-Intervention status.~~

Arizona's LEAs and schools in the current environment are dealing with fiscal and accountability challenges that make the purposeful allocation of resources all the more critical. While LEAs and schools that receive federal funds have those additional resources to operate their programs, they also must attend to the additional requirements that are associated with the receipt of federal funds.

ADE is requesting Wavier 13 to allow funding for other Title I schools at risk. The process to ensure, on an annual basis, that all priority and focus schools have sufficient funding to implement their required interventions prior to distributing the ESEA section 1003(a) funds to other Title I schools is as follows:

1. LEA's with Priority and Focus schools will submit either a 1003(g) SIG or 1003(a) Priority or Focus grant application to ADE in the Spring of FY 15.
2. LEAs with Priority and Focus schools will describe their current conditions in regards to the each of the 7 Turnaround Principles in their grant application. If the LEA demonstrates that they have conducted a thorough needs assessment, their application aligns with the reason(s) the school(s) were identified as a Focus and/or Priority school(s) and meets all of the requirements of Priority and Focus schools in section 2 D and 2E the LEA will be awarded grant funds.
3. In addition, the LEA must demonstrate that the plan for each school consists of requested funds and/or resources that support evidence-based practices, materials and programs, improvement of instructional opportunities, increased learning time, interventions for low performing students.
4. Reviewers will evaluate the budget alignment plan to ensure the plan for each school addresses the identified needs and will lead to progress towards the performance targets and fully addresses the allocation of resources and consists only of reasonable, necessary and allowable expenses directly related to full and effective implementation of the required 7 Turnaround Principles.
5. The review process will ensure that funded Arizona School Improvement Grants address all the critical components necessary for a comprehensive plan. LEAs may be asked to submit revisions in any section to more fully meet the standards.
6. ADE will provide technical assistance for LEAs with Priority and Focus schools throughout the grant process to ensure that 1003(a) grant money is first and foremost used to guarantee that all priority and focus schools have sufficient funding to implement their required interventions.
7. ADE will approve the grants for LEAs with Priority and Focus schools by June 30th. This will allow for LEAs with Priority and Focus schools time to plan for the upcoming school year and ensure that the LEAs with Priority and Focus schools have sufficient funding to implement their required

intervention prior to allocating any funds to ~~Pre-Priority~~At-Risk Priority or ~~Pre-Focus~~At-Risk Focus schools.

8. Once 1003(a) grant money has been allocated to LEAs who applied for grant funding to provide interventions for their identified Focus and Priority schools, any unallocated funding will be used to support other Title I schools identified as at risk.
9. ADE will develop a ~~pre-priority~~At-Risk Priority and a ~~pre-focus~~At-Risk Focus grant application for eligible LEAs with ~~pre-priority~~At-Risk Priority or ~~pre-focus~~At-Risk Focus schools. The grant will be available for LEAs to submit beginning in July once all of the Priority and Focus grants have been approved. The grant application will be modeled after the Priority and Focus grants.

### Continuous Improvement Plans

The ADE believes that clear plans with strategic, measurable, and results-based goals, with strategies and action steps that clearly delineate how those goals are expected to be achieved, and with support from all stakeholders will increase the likelihood of student success. Every LEA and school that receives Title I funds is required to submit a Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP), in order to be eligible to receive ESEA funds. The CIP must be developed in conjunction with stakeholders, parents, community members, teachers and administrators. The planning process includes determining the needs of the district and each school, followed by the development of the plan that will address those needs. An overall mission and vision from the district sets the direction of the LEA CIP and guides its schools. Based on a review of the data assembled through a comprehensive needs assessment, the LEA level CIP is developed which includes SMART (strategic, measurable, attainable, results-based, and time driven) goals. The SMART goal format requires that LEAs use data, especially disaggregated assessment data, to design and develop intervention strategies that will be most effective in closing specific achievement gaps as well as increasing levels of achievement for all students, especially in reading/language arts and mathematics. Under each goal the LEA selects strategies that will be implemented to achieve the goal and lists the action steps necessary to complete the implementation of the strategy. LEAs are also able to enter additional goals, if desired.

### Single Plan, Multi-Purpose

During the 2012-2013 school year, the ADE revised the format for the LEA-level CIP, in conjunction with its LEAs, to replace the ~~current~~ format designed at the beginning of NCLB implementation. This redesign ~~will move~~ moved the focus of the plan to how an LEA can meet Standards of Effective LEAs. Integral to this new format ~~will be~~ is a demonstration by the LEA of its commitment to the Continuous Improvement Planning Process LEAs ~~will address~~ addresses how they will meet AMOs for all students (including English language learners, students with disabilities, Native Americans, and migrant students) in the context of specific strategies for improving instruction and providing a safety net of supports, such as academic interventions, behavior support systems, transition programs, and inclusion of family services.

Engaging in Continuous Improvement is one of the most important processes that an LEA can undertake. Developing a Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) demonstrates that the LEA has a systemic and systematic approach to the work of educating its students. In the summer of 2013, after an extensive review of the research, a team from ADE, with representation from Title I, Title II-A, Title II-D, Title III, ESS and School Improvement, synthesized the most common descriptors of significant practices and developed the Standards for Effective LEAs and Continuous Improvement Plans. Using the Standards to assess the critical aspects of LEA operations empowers

the LEA – no matter the size or the types of programs and services offered – to reach goals, improve results, and become more effective by aligning plans, processes, and decisions. ADE took the opportunity to reframe the organization of the LEA CIP to reflect two purposes.

- A plan that reflects how the LEA has assessed its position in relation to achievement of Standards for Effective LEAs and how it intends to implement a continuous improvement process to drive student achievement efforts, and, as in previous years,
- A plan that allows an LEA the authority to receive and expend federal funds, especially ESEA funds.

A detailed description to the revised requirements for the LEA and School Continuous Improvement Plans can be found in the [Standards for Effective LEAs and Continuous Improvement Plans](#).

### School Level Plans

A detailed description to the revised requirements for School Continuous Improvement Plans can be found in the [Standards for Effective LEAs and Continuous Improvement Plans](#).

### ALEAT

ADE has developed a web-based application Arizona LEA Tracker (ALEAT) in which both LEA and school plans can be submitted to the ADE and managed by the LEA. The development of the CIP planning tool within ALEAT ~~has been continual since~~ was a partnership with the Southwest Comprehensive Center ~~was entered into in from~~ 2006 – 2012.. ~~Two years ago~~ School plans were moved from another application into ALEAT. This greatly improved the opportunity for alignment of school plans to the overall LEA plan.

As with any new technology, ALEAT often presents challenges to the users, many of whom are new to the responsibility of overseeing a plan in an electronic format or using the state's secure web access. ~~ADE split the state's initial training into sessions directed at the technical aspects of using the system and sessions for developing and writing both LEA and school level plans.~~ LEAs have several opportunities to learn how to prepare their plans. Each year the state holds two conferences in the Fall and Spring that provide time for LEAs to learn from Title I staff how to use the system plus how to write their plans. Additional trainings are scheduled each fall after the ~~fiscal allocations and~~ accountability decisions are announced. ~~for LEAs and schools in improvement status.~~ School Improvement and Intervention staff ~~also~~ provide direction on the continuous improvement process and how plans need to be focused on the specific improvement needs of the LEA and/or school, particularly how to address the indicators that put them into improvement status.

Currently all LEA plans are reviewed by ADE staff prior to the approval of their ESEA funding. LEAs generally have the flexibility to conduct research and choose strategies and programs that meet their needs and submit the accompanying fiscal application. In the case where schools in the LEA are identified ~~as Pre-Priority At-Risk Priority or Pre-Focus At-Risk Focus, pre-intervention, Focus or Priority,~~ ADE requires the LEA to identify the data used to make those decisions. LEAs may receive a notice of “Needs Further Action” in order to improve the alignment between the fiscal application and the CIP.-The state's current fiscal application combines Titles I and II-A. This necessitates a coordinated effort among Title I, Title II-A, and School Improvement staff so that acceptable plans are aligned with approvable budgets, based on the status of each LEA. ~~The state's~~

~~current fiscal application combines Titles I and II-A. This necessitates a coordinated effort among Title I, Title II-A, School Improvement staff so that acceptable plans are aligned with approvable budgets, based on the status of each LEA.~~ OELAS staff ensure that ELL-related items in the plan align with the appropriate Title III applications.

Each of the goals is established at the beginning of the school year with a SMART goal that determines the expected result. The progress for the associated strategies and action steps entered at the beginning of the year can be updated or modified throughout the year by the LEA, including changes based on amendments to the budget as resources are reallocated.

### Quality Plan Development

The plans that are currently entered in the system vary widely in quality. Since the ADE believes strongly that a quality plan is the foundation of the continuous improvement process, the state's next level of support to LEAs and to schools ~~will be directed~~ continues to be directed to improving the CIPs both at the LEA and school level. The Title I Section has begun working with Title I schools to redesign its targeted assistance and schoolwide program trainings. ~~Since the approval of ESEA Flexibility will facilitate the move to a single accountability structure, the Title I Section and the School Improvement and Intervention Section have begun to align supports for all Title I LEAs and schools through strengthening its Differentiated System of Support for Arizona Schools.~~

~~This past year the Title I Section developed a revised series of trainings on schoolwide programs.~~ A schoolwide program provides a more comprehensive approach to serving struggling students in higher poverty schools. ADE assessed the need for upgrading the SW training as threefold:

1. Approximately 74% of the Title I schools in Arizona are eligible to be SW but only 66% percent have indicated that they are operating a SW program. Changes in poverty data have increased the number of schools eligible to operate a schoolwide program.
2. The number of small charter schools, many of which are single site LEAs, that serve a higher poverty population is growing; the state feels that they are excellent candidates to operate their Title I programs as a schoolwide program. The administrative burdens of a targeted assistance program can be daunting to a small staff. Assisting these schools to develop and implement a schoolwide program, based on the schoolwide CIP, will allow more students to receive services.
3. In monitoring of LEAs with SW programs the state found the quality of the SW plans to be marginal in many instances and often in need of updating. Schools and LEAs apparently do not fully understand the whole school reform requirement of schoolwide programs, as evidenced by the weakness of this area of the school CIPs.

School teams ~~from 31 schools attended this year's pilot for the revised~~ attend schoolwide training for three sessions over the course of several months, culminating with the draft of the schoolwide plan. The work begins with two key steps - conducting a comprehensive needs assessment and selecting the whole school reform model - around which the plan will be developed. ~~The Arizona Standards and Rubrics for Improvement (currently being revised) Self-Assessment provide a guide to the needs assessment process.~~ To strengthen the school reform element, the training provides guidance on what the key components of a reform model are and how a school might make a decision to select a particular model in light of their own needs. Three ADE initiatives are reflected as examples of the reform models: RTI, arts integration, and technology integration. While the team

may choose another reform model or a combination of models that meets the needs of the school, the state strongly encourages that the team begin its considerations with RTI, which is supported by an ADE-wide initiative. (Note: Arizona's RTI process is undergoing improvement under a multi-tiered approach, described in Principle 1 as MTSS.) Below is a sample page from the schoolwide training materials that can be used to assist schools in organizing information about reform models prior to making a decision:

**Table 2F.1 2-49: Analysis: CSR Models**

<b>ANALYSIS: CSR MODELS</b>	
Use this form as a guide when researching CSR models and determining which would most effectively meet the needs of the school as identified in the comprehensive needs assessment.	
<b>Name of CSR Model</b>	<i>Identify the model.</i>
<b>Service Provider</b>	<i>Identify the provider.</i>
<b>Target Grade Level / Target Population (s)</b>	<i>Identify the grade levels (e.g., elementary, Grades K-3, high school) or populations (e.g., AYP subgroup, parents, staff) the CSR model addresses.</i>
<b>Model Mission / Focus</b>	<i>What is the mission of the CSR model? What is the objective of the CSR model?</i>
<b>Model Description</b>	<i>Briefly describe the CSR model, how it is structured, and how it is implemented within a school.</i>
<b>Cost</b>	<i>What costs are associated with the model?</i>
<b>Title I Schoolwide Component</b>	<b><i>Alignment of CSR Model Provision to Schoolwide Plan</i></b>
<b>School-wide Reform Strategies</b>	<i>How does the model incorporate various areas and elements of the school into a comprehensive education program?</i>
<b>Highly Qualified Teachers / Paraprofessionals</b>	<i>How does the model contribute to making all staff members HQ?</i>
<b>Professional Development</b>	<i>What professional development is provided with the model? What kind of input/involvement does the teaching staff provide?</i>
<b>Attracting and Retaining Highly Qualified Teachers</b>	<i>How does the model address attracting and retaining HQ teachers?</i>
<b>Parental Involvement</b>	<i>How does the model encourage and emphasize parental involvement?</i>
<b>Transition of Students</b>	<i>How does the model address the transition of students between grade and school levels?</i>
<b>Data Driven Decision Making</b>	<i>How does the model measure and incorporate data?</i>
<b>External Facilitator / Technical Support</b>	<i>What kind of technical assistance and support does the model provide?</i>
<b>Coordination and Integration of Different Funding Sources / Programs</b>	<i>How does the model incorporate various areas and elements of the school into a comprehensive education program?</i>



<b>School Improvement</b>	<i>What evidence is there of positive effect on student achievement, especially evidence that correlates to the school's student population and improvement needs?</i>
---------------------------	--

Developing the body of the plan, the team researches the appropriate strategies and actions steps needed to meet its needs with alignment to the Title I requirements for a schoolwide plan. The training includes guidance tools and worksheets to assist the team with the process. After each session the team completes that portion of the process and assembles data in preparation for the next section.

School budgets form the final portion of the training, based on the fiscal schoolwide guidance from ED. The draft plan developed by the last session must be reviewed by the stakeholders from the school and the LEA and then the final version is entered into ALEAT.

Due to the complexities of what is known as Schoolwide 3, the state is ~~developing a separate module that deals~~ specifically ~~dealing~~ with the fiscal challenges involved in combining all resources – federal and state and local – into the schoolwide plan. This is a cooperative effort with one of the state's largest LEAs, the State Auditor General's office, and LEA business managers to uncover and address any barriers to full integration of resources as intended under a schoolwide plan.

To address the unique situation of some of the state's charter schools that are single site LEAs and would be required to prepare both an LCIP and SCIP, the state ~~has begun to~~ provides a Single Site LCIP training. These schools will be able to design a CIP that can serve as both an LEA plan and yet includes the schoolwide plan components. For example, the mission and vision will include the school reform model.

The [guidance documents](#) are currently available on the Title I web page. ~~Based on feedback from the initial participants, the Title I staff will be making modifications.~~ As the tools for schools in improvement are developed in collaboration with the School Improvement and Intervention Section (described later in this section), this work ~~will be~~ **has been** wrapped into a single Continuous Improvement Process that will be made available for all Arizona schools.

## Continuous Improvement Process

### Universal Level of Support (see Table 2.16 for complete chart)

	<b>Technical Assistance</b>	<b>Professional Development</b>	<b>Progress Monitoring</b>
<b>Universal All Title I Schools Letter Grades A, B &amp; C</b>	Website contains processes, protocols and tools for School and LEA to use as needed.	Connections made to other PD offerings within agency. E-Learning opportunities.	Access to progress monitoring process and tools on website.

~~ADE's differentiated recognition and support system provides incentives for LEAs and schools to continuously improve student achievement by providing more flexibility and local control to those LEAs that make a Letter Grade of A, B, or C. Schools in improvement status are required to submit additional information as well as meet various requirements. ADE believes in rewarding successful LEAs and schools with more flexibility, and local control. Section 2.C contains numerous examples of how Arizona recognizes and rewards high performing schools. These rewards include: meaningful public recognition, leadership opportunities, and financial rewards. LEA and school grades will be posted each year on ADE's website. Strong academic performance ensures that schools will not have to implement the improvement interventions, which require more prescriptive efforts. Title I schools with the Letter Grade of D or F will be required to implement rigorous interventions.~~

~~ADE's School Improvement and Intervention Section makes available, through ADE's website, the continuous improvement planning process and forms, Standards and Rubrics for Improvement Self-Assessment for LEAs and schools, progress monitoring tools, and links to the latest evidence-based resources. Arizona's research web page has links to the school improvement, effective schools, and effective districts research from the Center on Innovation and Improvement, the Center for Comprehensive School Reform, Dean Fixsen, the National Implementation Research Network, the National High School Center, What Works Clearinghouse, and others. ADE's SI Section will finalize the creation of Data Workbooks and Data Reflection Summaries plus specific tools to support the LEAs and schools analysis of its students with disabilities and students who are learning English. In addition to supports provided through Title I and School Improvement and Intervention, LEAs and schools have access to a variety of resources provided throughout ADE that address students with disabilities, English language learners, students at-risk for dropping out, migrant, homeless, and Native Americans. The chart below lists some of these resources available to all Title I schools.~~

~~The ADE Family Engagement Initiative is emerging as a collaborative effort within the agency to promote family, school, and community partnerships throughout the state. The cross-agency Family Engagement Initiative supports LEAs to build and sustain programs that enhance student achievement and school improvement. As a new state member of the Johns Hopkins University, National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS), the Initiative offers LEAs access to research-based resources and consultation. LEA and school leadership teams that use the NNPS model, or best practices from other evidence-based frameworks, to formulate SMART family engagement and partnership goals in their CIP will likely experience improved student achievement and school improvement. Ongoing Family Engagement Initiative collaborations will guide LEAs in the development of systematic, integrated, and effective family, school, and community partnership programs.~~

**Table 2.F.2 2-20: Areas of Support and Strengths of ADE Divisions**

Support Area	ADE Division	Strengthens
Standards Implementation	Standards and Assessment	Curriculum and Instruction
Language Acquisition	OELAS, K-12 Literacy	Curriculum and Instruction
Early Childhood	Early Childhood	Curriculum and



<b>Education</b>	Education Unit, ESS (Special Ed.)	Instruction
<b>Dropout Prevention and Student Engagement</b>	Dropout Prevention, <del>AZRTI</del> MTSS	School climate, and culture; student engagement
<b>Adult Education</b>	Adult Education	Literacy, Family engagement
<b>Gifted Education</b>	Gifted Education	Curriculum, assessment, instruction
<b>Response to Intervention</b>	<del>AZRTI</del> MTSS	Assessment, instruction, school climate and culture
<b>Educator Effectiveness Principal/Teacher Evaluation Systems</b>	Title II	Leadership and instruction
<b>English Language Instruction</b>	OELAS (ELL)	Curriculum, instruction, assessment
<b>Special Education</b>	ESS	Curriculum, assessment, instruction, school culture and climate
<b>Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports</b>	<del>AZRTI</del> MTSS	School Climate and Culture, Instruction
<b>Native American Education</b>	Highly Effective Schools	School climate and culture, assessment, curriculum, instruction, family engagement
<b>Use of Data</b>	Research and Evaluation	Continuous improvement planning
<b>Preparing for Workforce</b>	Career and Technical Education	Curriculum, instruction, assessment
<b>Leadership Development</b>	AZ LEADS <sup>3</sup>	Leadership
<b>Professional Development Leadership Academy</b>	Highly Effective Teachers and Leaders – Capacity Building	Professional development planning
<b>Character Education</b>	Special Populations	School culture and climate
<b>Standards and Rubrics Resource Guide on WestEd site</b>	School Improvement and Intervention	Curriculum, assessment, instruction, school climate and culture,

		leadership
<b>Family Engagement Initiative</b>	<b>Cross-Agency Collaboration</b>	<b>Family Engagement</b>

### **Pre-Intervention Pre-PriorityAt-Risk Priority and Pre-FocusAt-Risk Focus Schools**

When an LEA is alerted to a school being in **Pre-Intervention, Pre-PriorityAt-Risk Priority or Pre-FocusAt-Risk Focus** status, the LEA will be required to work with their school leadership team to develop the School's Continuous Improvement Plan (SCIP) targeting the weaknesses identifying them as a Pre-Intervention School.

The SCIP of a **Pre-Intervention Pre-PriorityAt-Risk Priority or Pre-FocusAt-Risk Focus** School will be reviewed and approved by the LEA and a review report submitted to ADE. This plan will be submitted to ADE through ALEAT, ADE's online planning tool. In addition, the LEA will have to address the building of its capacity and plan for the necessary technical assistance and monitoring activities to be provided to the school. This will be communicated through the LCIP, which will be submitted through ALEAT and approved by ADE. This plan will be submitted to the corresponding County Superintendent/ESA and ADE through ALEAT, ADE's online planning tool.

Quarterly regional face-to-face trainings will be available for LEA and school leaders to attend.

Webinars will be made available to **Pre-Intervention Pre-PriorityAt-Risk Priority or Pre-FocusAt-Risk Focus** Schools and their LEAs that take them through the Continuous Improvement Planning Process and other "just in time" topics based on feedback received through surveys and the face-to-face meetings. Each LEA with a school in **Pre-Intervention Pre-PriorityAt-Risk Priority or Pre-FocusAt-Risk Focus** status will be assigned a Title I and School Improvement staff member. ~~and receive support and recommendations from the Achievement Oversight Committee.~~

Once 1003(a) grant money has been allocated to LEAs who applied for grant funding to provide interventions for their identified Focus and Priority schools, any unallocated funding will be used to support other Title I **Pre-PriorityAt-Risk Priority and Pre-FocusAt-Risk Focus** schools. ADE will develop a **Pre-PriorityAt-Risk Priority or Pre-FocusAt-Risk Focus** grant application for eligible LEAs with **Pre-PriorityAt-Risk Priority or Pre-FocusAt-Risk Focus** schools. The grant will be available for LEAs to submit beginning in July once all of the Priority and Focus grants have been approved. The grant application will be modeled after the Priority and Focus grants. ~~LEAs with Pre-Intervention schools will work with school leadership to complete the Data Workbook and Data Reflection Summary to be available for review by ADE staff, if the school fails to make progress. These tools have been successfully piloted with some of Arizona Tier III schools for progress monitoring of student performance. The table below summarizes the differentiated support that will be available for all Title I schools that are not in improvement.~~

**Table 2.22: Differentiated System of Support for Arizona Schools Continuous Improvement Process**

<b>All Schools Letter Grades A, B &amp; C</b>	<b>Technical Assistance</b>	<b>Professional Development (PD)</b>	<b>Progress Monitoring</b>	<b>Compliance Monitoring</b>
<b>Pre-Intervention</b>	Assigned Title I and other ADE	SH Quarterly trainings provided	Data Workbook and Data	Title I Cycles

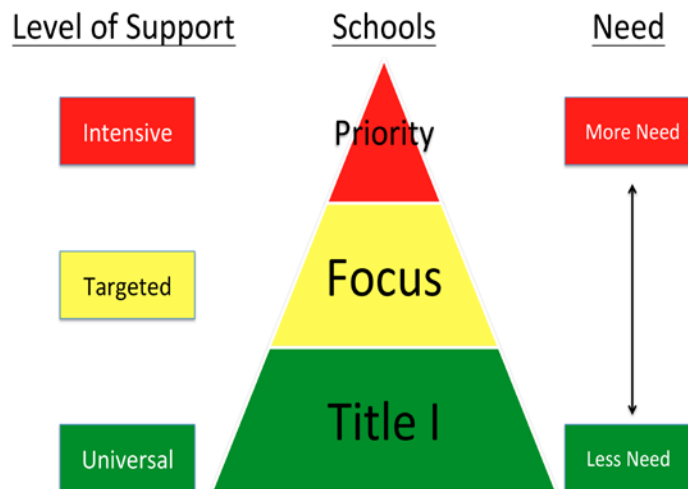
<b>Schools</b>	staff members, as appropriate, to LEA; list of approved external providers; ADE resources on website; Systems Audit by Solutions Team	in each of the three regions of the state; Other ADE trainings; ADE Conferences; E-Learning opportunities	Reflection Summary; LEA and School Continuous Improvement Plans on ALEAT	
<b>A, B &amp; C Schools</b>	Website contains processes, protocols and tools for School and LEA to use as needed.	Connections made to other PD offerings within agency. E-Learning opportunities.	Access to progress monitoring process and tools on website.	Title I Cycles

ADE's SII Section will create additional tools to support the LEAs and schools analysis of its students with disabilities and students who are learning English.

Pre-Intervention schools may want to use a Solutions Team to conduct an on-site audit of the LEA and school (A.R.S §15-241 subsections O & Q). The audit will include an in-depth analysis of the functionality of the educational systems. The evaluation of these systems will identify strengths, improvement areas and barriers. It will be based on Arizona's Revised Standards and Rubrics for LEAs and Schools and will include, but is not limited to, curriculum, instruction, interventions, leadership, stakeholder engagement, LEA support systems to schools (technical assistance and professional development), district policies and practices, human resources, and resource management.

After a year, if improvement is demonstrated, more flexibility in improvement planning will be provided and if limited progress is made, an on-site visit from an ADE team member will be made to more closely evaluate LEA and school's situation.

**Figure 2.10: Multi-Tiered Support System for LEAs and Schools in Improvement Status**



**Table 2.23: Implementation Timeline**

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party or Parties Responsible	Evidence (Attachment)	Resources (e.g., staff time, additional funding)	Significant Obstacles
<del>Revise data Tools (one for all schools and one for Pre-Intervention)</del>	<del>July 30, 2015</del>	<del>SI's Progress Monitoring Team</del>		<del>Current SI staff</del>	<del>None</del>
<del>Revise guidance Document to accompany the School Improvement Planning Process</del>	<del>July 30, 2015</del>	<del>SI's Technical Assistance Team</del>		<del>Current SI staff</del>	<del>None</del>
<del>Data analysis tools to assist with understanding and the needs of students with disabilities and ELLs</del>	<del>June 30, 2012</del>	<del>SI's Technical Assistance Team in collaboration with ADE Special Ed and OELAS staff</del>		<del>Current ADE staff</del>	<del>None</del>

## 2.G BUILD SEA, LEA, AND SCHOOL CAPACITY TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING

2.G Describe the SEA's process for building SEA, LEA, and school capacity to improve student learning in all schools and, in particular, in low-performing schools and schools with the largest achievement gaps, including through:

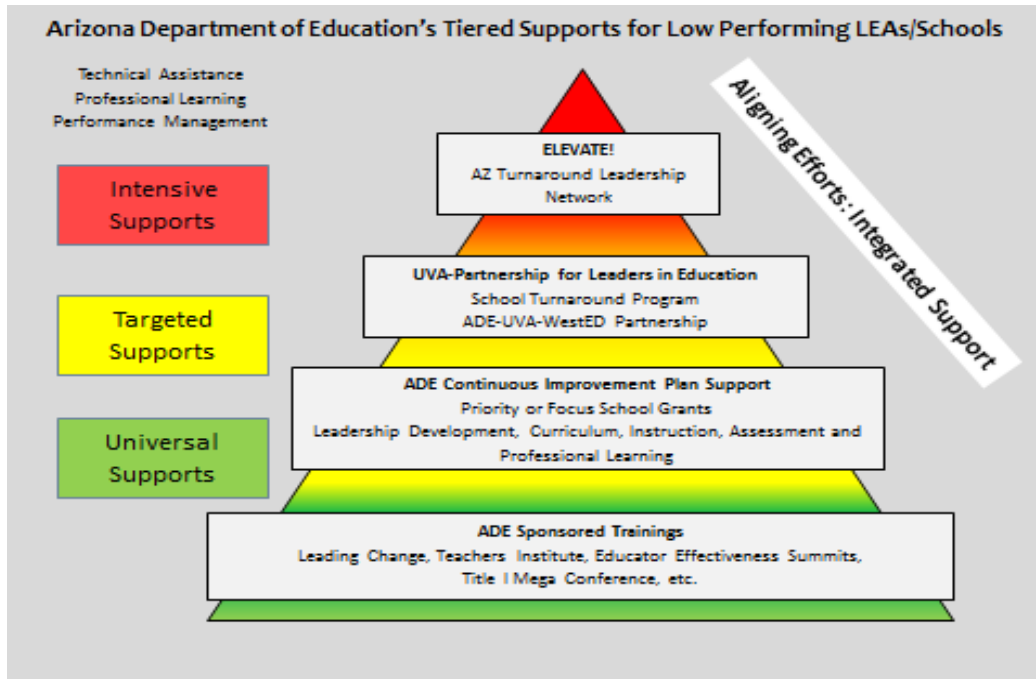
- i. timely and comprehensive monitoring of, and technical assistance for, LEA implementation of interventions in priority and focus schools;
- ii. ensuring sufficient support for implementation of interventions in priority schools, focus schools, and other Title I schools identified under the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system (including through leveraging funds the LEA was previously required to reserve under ESEA section 1116(b)(10), SIG funds, and other Federal funds, as permitted, along with State and local resources); and
- iii. holding LEAs accountable for improving school and student performance, particularly for turning around their priority schools.

Explain how this process is likely to succeed in improving SEA, LEA, and school capacity.

***Building Capacity at the SEA, LEA and School***

In order for ADE to align and prioritize resources to build the capacity at the LEA and school level, LEAs with low performing schools are supported and held accountable within a multi-tiered system of support. This system of support has been revised based on feedback from both internal and external stakeholders. The system of support differentiates the types of support for all low performing schools based on their needs and aims to “Educate and empower LEA and school leaders to focus on improving teaching and learning that results in significant gains in student achievement.”

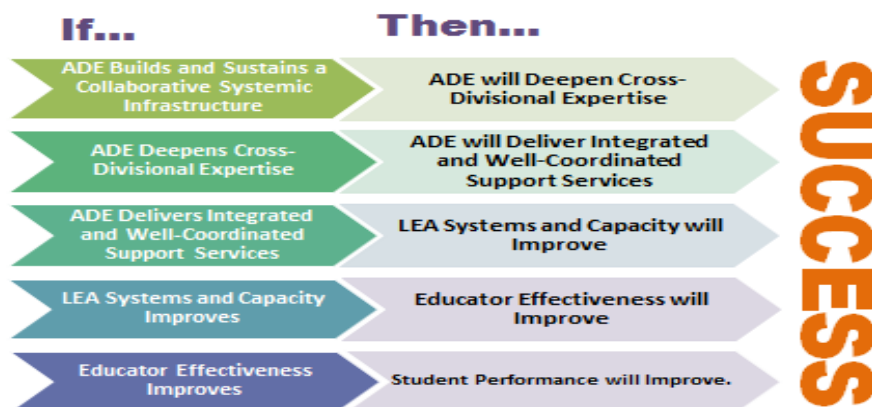
**Figure 2G.i ADE’s Tiered Supports**



### Aligning Efforts: Integrated Support Model

In place of the previous ADE Technical Oversight Team, ADE will be piloting the Integrated Support Model beginning in the spring of 2015. The Integrated Support Pilot is a delivery model aimed at leveraging and coordinating the expertise of the Arizona Department of Education to support and empower districts and schools as they work to dramatically improve student achievement. The theory of action for the Integrated Support Model is as follows:

**Figure 2G.ii Integrated Support Model**



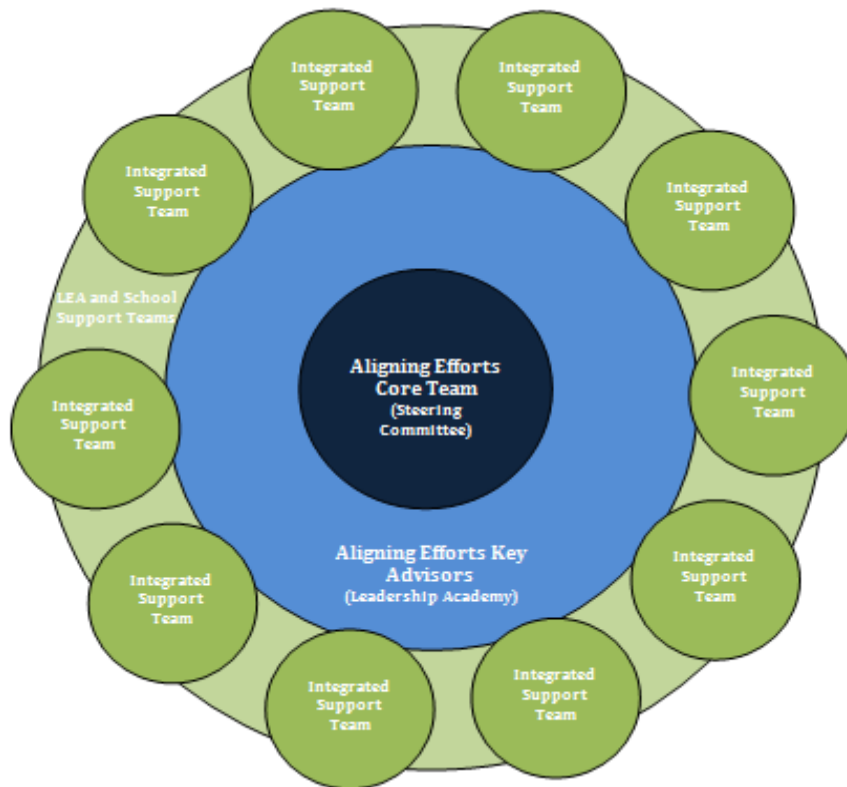
ADE commits to:

- Collaborating with LEAs to prioritize and align agreed upon areas of support based on LEA and school needs.
- Operating as ONE support system and sharing data more seamlessly.
- Providing efficient and effective services that streamline/reduce monitoring and reporting duplication and burden on LEAs and schools.
- Providing increased meaningful and strategic support and accountability for LEAs and schools in the areas of professional development, technical assistance, resource sharing, data literacy, educator recruitment and retention and results-driven accountability.

This Community of Practice (COP) is part of a larger Integrated Support Model that serves as part of the collaborative infrastructure at the Department. The mission of the Aligning Efforts COP is to ensure that ADE delivers integrated and well-coordinated monitoring and support to LEAs and schools.

The COP will work to align and coordinate the systems and structures of ADE's various units so that they operate as one support network. Creating these effective and efficient services will enhance our technical assistance, as well as streamline and reduce monitoring and reporting duplications for the LEAs and schools we serve.

**Figure 2G.iii Support Network**



### **ELEVATE!: Arizona's Turnaround Leadership Network**



ELEVATE! Arizona’s Turnaround Leadership Network is designed to educate and empower LEA leaders and principals to focus on improving teaching and learning that results in significant gains in student achievement. It accomplishes this goal using a two-year Cohort model that includes:

1. Quarterly professional development sessions over a two-year period (eight total for each Cohort). Professional development builds on the work of Public Impact (Turnaround Leader Competencies) and Paul Bambrick-Santoyo (Leverage Leadership and Driven by Data) and other research and proven best practices;
2. Coaching and mentoring between professional development sessions from trained Implementation Specialists.
3. Progress monitoring and adjustment to ensure continuous improvement.
4. Schools and LEAs that are selected to participate must commit to the two-year program

ADE will partner with ClearView Consulting to provide training for staff working in the ELEVATE! Program as well as training for participants. Since 2010, ClearView Consulting has partnered with top-flight organizations, such as the University of Virginia’s (UVA) School Turnaround Specialist Program to identify the principals and districts ready for school turnaround success.

ClearView Consulting is unique in their relationship with UVA, having designed UVA’s process for District Readiness and leading in the design and implementation of competency-based interviews with district staff and school leaders. ClearView also led the research effort that led to a criterion valid Leadership Competency Model for School Turnaround.

ClearView Consulting will assist ADE with the following:

- 1) District Readiness for ELEVATE! schools
- 2) Behavior Event Interviews for ELEVATE! participants;
- 3) Build the capacity of staff supporting districts and schools in ELEVATE!
- 4) Facilitating ELEVATE! Sessions for participants with sessions such as coaching conversations for increased effectiveness.

### **University of Virginia-Partnership for Leaders in Education-School Turnaround Specialist Program**

In order to achieve quick, dramatic, and sustainable gains in student achievement in our states lowest performing schools and schools with the largest achievement gaps, as well as maintain consistency with the ADE’s School Improvement model to support our states lowest performing schools, ADE has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the SWCC, the UVA, WestEd and other southwest consortium states that establishes the joint agreements for the Southwest consortium. Arizona’s membership in the consortium obligates ADE to fully participate in the UVA-STSP program. Arizona currently has 5 SEA top-level representatives participating in the Southwest consortium UVA cohort. The work with UVA and SWCC pilot is focused on the development of regional training for needed turnaround leaders. This is the first time for UVA to involve state level staff in the training with LEAs and schools. The plan is to provide the UVA Turnaround Specialist Training on the west coast resulting in a turnaround specialist certification upon successful

completion of the program with reciprocity across the participating western states. The UVA-STSP utilizes a systemic approach to change by working collaboratively with state-level, district and school leadership teams to build internal capacity and ensure leadership is seen as a primary lever to drive student outcomes. ADE's School Improvement and Intervention Section is currently in the process of refining structures for technical assistance, monitoring and resources, for LEAs and schools to closely align to the UVA-STSP model. **As part of the ADE tiered system of support, ADE will continue to partner with UVA for services for districts with schools in improvement.**

### **Arizona Charter Board and Arizona Charter Association Partnerships**

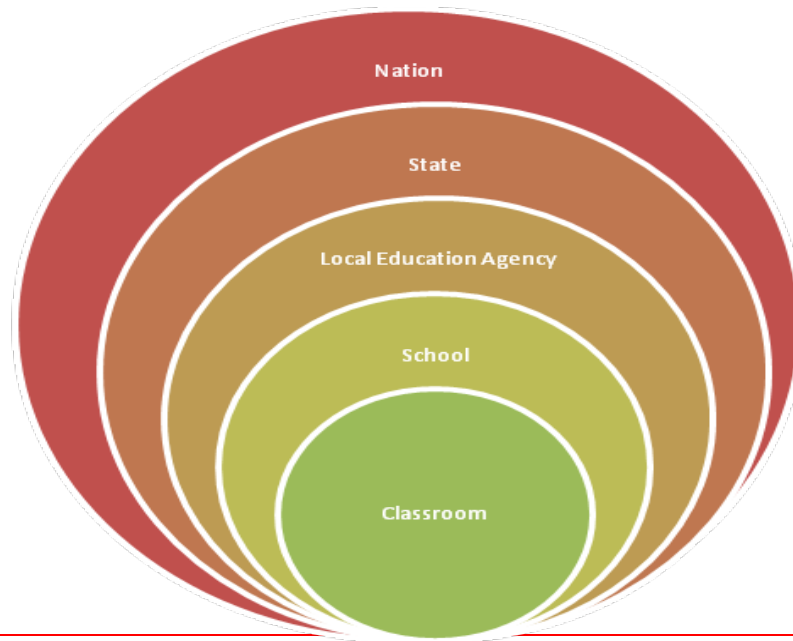
As ADE is committed to both districts and charters and has a collaborative relationship with the Arizona Charter School Board, ADE will also be partnering with the Arizona Charter Schools Association to provide tailored support through the Quality Schools Program. The Quality Schools Program is an initiative of the Center for Student Achievement. The Quality Schools Program is a three year program that includes a series of job-embedded professional development and intensive on-site coaching for teachers and school leaders looking to improve student achievement. Through data-driven instruction and Professional Learning Communities, schools will create, implement, and sustain a systematic approach to curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development. After three years, schools will be equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to positively affect student learning and increase student achievement.

The Quality Schools Program takes a three-pronged approach to improve student achievement in schools around Arizona. All components of the program are grounded in the research and best practices of effective schools, transformative leaders, and master teachers.

Additionally, the Center offers leadership development for emerging and veteran leaders. Participants focus on how to implement effective and practical leadership strategies to improve school culture and outcomes.

~~The nation, state, district, school, and classroom are the components of the state's education system. The system is only as strong as its weakest link. Understanding this, ADE will focus on building the capacity of LEAs holding them accountable for building the capacity of schools, which in turn need to be accountable for the capacity at the classroom level for providing instruction that meets the needs of all learners. Until very recently, the classroom has been left out of the mix. It is ADE's School Improvement and Intervention Section's (SI) belief that when holding entities accountable for performance, adequate supports need to be in place. SI has been developing procedures over the last 10 years for addressing the needs of LEAs and schools in improvement, but made limited progress until recently with changes in the identification of the state's lowest performing schools and implementation of the School Improvement Grants. Embracing the concepts of continuous improvement at the state level is critical to the design of the system of support. SI is continually pursuing ways to provide better support, assistance and accountability to LEAs and schools. The lessons learned over the last two years have provided us with greatly enhanced processes and tools for technical assistance, professional development, progress monitoring and compliance monitoring that are having a positive effect on student achievement in schools identified as pre-intervention, focus and priority.~~

### **Figure 2.11: Education System Components**



Arizona was awarded \$25 million through the U.S. Department of Education's Race to the Top Phase 3 (RTTT) competitive grant program to help advance Arizona's education reform efforts in December 2011. The ADE, in close collaboration with the Governor's Office of Education Innovation, Arizona's County School Superintendents and other Arizona education stakeholders have engaged together to support LEAs, schools and educators with implementing Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics using STEM as an important vehicle, and to further enhance the capacity of the state's data system to support data-driven decision making.

The following are systems and supports that have been developed through Race to the Top to help increase the state's capacity to both strategically align and provide professional development, technical assistance and support, and monitoring of improvement efforts statewide:

- Augmentation the capacity of the ADE to effectively support statewide Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards collaborative implementation efforts – to include professional development, resource development and communications and awareness activities.
- Establish five (5) Regional Education Centers throughout the state, in collaboration with Arizona's County School Superintendents, to support and provide regional-based Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards implementation support services in collaboration with the ADE and the Governor's Office of Education Innovation. The Regional Education Centers include (\* indicates lead county): East-Central Regional Service Center (Gila County\*, Graham County, Greenlee and Pinal County), Maricopa County Education Service Agency (Maricopa County\*), Northeast Arizona Regional Center (Apache County, Coconino County, Navajo County\*), Southern Arizona Regional Education Center (Cochise County, Pima County\*, Santa Cruz County), and West-Central Regional Service Center (Mohave County, La Paz County, Yavapai County\*, Yuma County).

**Figure 2G.iv Regional Centers**

- Enhanced data quality, access, and utility to better inform educational decision-making. This has included the completion of the Student-Teacher-Course Connection, which established the framework and data to operationalize the release of teacher and administrator dashboards, the development and implementation of a new agency online Content Management System (CMS) to manage content more efficiently and effectively and to provide education stakeholders a new tool to find and access the agency's content and resources online, and the creation of the College and Career Ready Index, from a data systems perspective, to further inform school and LEA accountability.
- A cooperative Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) between the Governor's Office of Education Innovation (GOEI) and the ADE to support implementation efforts that include vertical alignment of statewide goals and reform efforts among and between ADE and the Regional Education Centers, provide retrieval and analysis for the development and enhancement of data dashboards for the Arizona Ready State Report Card, and a collaborative process for supporting communications and awareness relative to Arizona's education reform efforts statewide.
- The provision of \$12.5M to 221 Participating LEAs through grants to build their capacity and support their locally-developed plan, in alignment with a general scope of work framework, for implementing Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics

ADE has been awarded a third round Race to the Top Award. The following are the systems which will be developed to increase the state's capacity to align all components of the education system and to provide professional development, technical assistance, and monitoring of improvement efforts:

- ~~Establish five (5) Regional Education Centers as a key implementation mechanism for helping school and district personnel transition smoothly to enhanced standards and rigorous assessments, use data to continuously improve instruction and ensure successful postsecondary outcomes for students.~~
- ~~Create effective transition strategies towards implementation of Arizona’s Common Core Standards in partnership with the Regional Education Centers and the Arizona STEM Network.~~
- ~~Enhance data quality, access, and utility to better inform educational decision making. Some of the specific processes to be developed include a common course numbering system, a process and technical support for LEA engagement in course mapping, establishing the student teacher data link, enhancement of data dashboards, customization of the ADE website to provide professional development, software applications, and access to timely, accurate data.~~
- ~~A cooperative Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) between the Governor’s Office of Education Innovation (GOEI) and the ADE to support implementation efforts that include vertical alignment of statewide goals and reform efforts among and between ADE and the Regional Education Centers, provide retrieval and analysis for the development of the new data dashboards for the Arizona Ready Council State Report Card, and the development of a performance management process that monitors and communicates statewide outcome data and supports implementation adjustments based on that data.~~
- ~~\$12,500,000 will be provided to eligible LEAs to build their capacity in areas addressed above~~

~~Most of the departments throughout ADE focus their work with the LEAs. SH’s restructuring efforts recognized the need to focus their work on LEAs, as well. What has been learned since the implementation of AZ LEARNS in 2001 and NCLB in 2002 is that schools cannot sustain progress over time when there is staff turnover if the LEA does not understand, support or have the capacity to address future needs of the school. Within the last two years, SH has put its emphasis on building LEA capacity as evidenced in the state’s new mission statement, “To build LEA capacity through a comprehensive system of support that ensures effective and sustainable teaching and learning environments that result in high academic achievement.” In order to provide LEAs with a comprehensive system of support, SH will:~~

- ~~Work as an integrated collaborative team with a unified voice.~~
- ~~Build LEA capacity and sustainability through research, data analysis, and reflection.~~
- ~~Support the continuous improvement of schools to ensure high academic student achievement.~~
- ~~Collaborate with other sections to ensure access to resources and supports.~~
- ~~Build relationships with district and schools that foster trust, allowing schools and districts to thrive.~~
- ~~Demonstrate a personal commitment to the success of all LEAs and schools~~

~~As stated previously, ADE’s School Improvement and Intervention Section (SH) has reorganized to merge state and federal improvement staff in order to reduce duplication and increase efficiency of effort. In restructuring, SH has also increased its collaboration and formed partnerships with other sections within ADE to provide more comprehensive guidance to LEAs and schools. SH is working with ADE’s leadership training staff, AZ LEADS<sup>3</sup>, to provide professional development to leaders~~

~~at the LEA and school levels; with ADE's Title I staff to review SIG applications and coordinate school-wide services; with ADE's special education staff, Exceptional Student Services- Comprehensive System of Personnel Development, to address academic issues within schools in improvement specifically addressing their special education populations; ADE's K-12 Literacy Section partnered with SII to provide professional development focused on effective instruction. SII is also participating on an ADE committee that is overseeing implementation of the state's new standards and assessment roll-out.~~

ADE's system of support and accountability for LEAs with priority schools is intended to create opportunities for LEAs to establish conditions to systematically support and sustain successful turnaround initiatives in priority schools. ADE understands that each priority school's readiness may vary and that there is no specific formula for turning around a school.

In addition to collaboration within the agency, SII has participated with external providers. These include National Institute on School Leadership (NISL) – turnaround leader training, Darden/Curry Partnership for Leaders in Education-University of Virginia's (UVA) School Turnaround Specialist Program in partnership with Southwest Comprehensive Center (SWCC), and Margaret Heritage (CRESST/Assessment and Accountability Content Center) with Formative Assessment Training. To build state capacity to provide future training opportunities, a Train the Trainers model has been incorporated into the professional development being provided by NISL and CRESST/Assessment and Accountability Content Center.

The LEA is the primary entity responsible for building and sustaining a school's capacity for improvement. Unless the LEAs proactively support and hold school leaders accountable, sustained change is nearly impossible based on the state's previous experience. LEA and school leadership teams from Arizona SIG schools participating together in SII's trainings on turnaround leadership and formative assessment and in technical assistance and monitoring site visits. Formative Assessment training, provided through Margaret Heritage from CRESST, resulted from the need to bring a training focus that would directly impact the classroom. School leadership teams also accompany SII and LEA staff when conducting classroom observations and debrief with SII and LEA staff.

- i. **timely and comprehensive monitoring of, and technical assistance for, LEA implementation of interventions in priority and focus schools**

### ***Monitoring***

ADE understands that transparent monitoring and reporting helps accelerate progress throughout the turnaround process. ADE support teams will work collaboratively with LEAs and school(s) to develop meaningful detailed performance targets, milestones and timelines in order to meet priority and focus school improvement exit criteria. ADE will implement a gradual release model for accountability based on a schools' progress towards meeting these targets.

ADE support teams will monitor LEAs with priority and focus schools through on-site visits and desktop implementation checks to ensure that full and effective implementation of the selected intervention model is occurring in each priority school for three years and that full and effective



implementation of the selected interventions aligned to the turnaround principles that address the reason for identification is occurring in each focus school ~~for three years.~~

Assurances: LEAs with priority and focus schools will be required to submit signed assurances to ADE to demonstrate their commitment and capacity to fully meet all of the priority and/or focus school requirements. In addition to the assurances, LEAs with priority and focus schools will be required to submit in ALEAT or provide evidence during on-site visits of non-negotiable documents to support the assurances. The assurances will become part of the LEAs monitoring documents in ALEAT and will be submitted annually. ADE's School Improvement and Intervention Section in the process of completing the final list of priority and focus school assurances and non-negotiable supporting documents based on the requirements outlined in section 2.D.iii and 2.E. iii.

On-Site Visits: ADE will conduct annual on-site visits to each LEA and priority school to: evaluate and verify the progress on meeting performance targets and milestones; verify progress on full and effective implementation of the selected intervention model; and check for programmatic and fiscal compliance. ADE will conduct annual on-site visits to each LEA and focus school to: evaluate and verify the progress on meeting performance targets and milestones; verify progress on full and effective implementation of the selected interventions aligned to the turnaround principles that address the reason for identification; and check for programmatic and fiscal compliance. The site visit protocol will align to the on-site readiness visit protocol and will include the following activities: stakeholder (leadership, teachers, support staff, students, parents and/or community members) focus group interviews at the school and LEA level, classroom observations, data presentations from the LEA focused on student and teacher performance and verification of fiscal compliance. The number of on-site visits provided will be based on the LEA and school need.

Reporting: LEA and School continuous improvement plans will be continuously monitored during LEA and school on-site progress monitoring reviews as well as through desktop reviews and updated as necessary., with final revisions annually for both priority and focus schools. ADE will monitor goals, strategies, as well as timelines and implementation of activities reported by the LEA on its implementation plan for the selected intervention model or plan using ALEAT. The plan includes descriptions of the goals and strategies, detailed action steps (start and end dates, person(s) responsible, specified budget allocations and expenditures), and related tasks with due dates and assignments. ~~In addition, LEAs with priority schools will upload their model template in the ALEAT system. LEAs with focus schools will upload their intervention template in the ALEAT system. ADE will monitor the LEAs progress on meeting performance targets for leading and achievement indicators as well as implementation of the selected intervention model or plan on a 90 day cycle.~~ The ADE will review, provide feedback as necessary and approve these plans in the ALEAT system.

One of the lessons learned by using an additional tool such as the progress monitoring of implementation tool (PMI) is that it caused additional burden and duplication for LEAs and schools as they had to focus on both the Continuous Improvement Plan and the PMI. In order to reduce the burden and duplication, ADE will use the LEA and School Continuous Improvement Plan in ALEAT to guide the discussion during the leadership team meetings at priority and focus schools and to document progress of implementation. By focusing on the continuous improvement plans and not a separate tool ADE ensures the LEA and school is fully and effectively implementing their



comprehensive LEA and School Continuous Improvement Plans which will include their selected intervention models and plans. ADE will provide feedback in ALEAT on progress of implementation the LEA and school plans which will include goals, strategies and action steps for the selected intervention model or intervention plans aligned to the turnaround principles. This method of documentation still allows ADE to document the progress on implementation of each of the SIG intervention models and/or the seven turnaround principles and to identify next steps that must be addressed. ADE will provide the LEA and school with a level of implementation rating for the selected model or plan during the 90 day cycle checks.

~~In addition to the LEA and School Continuous Improvement Plans, LEAs with priority and focus schools will be required to submit a data summary three times a year to the ADE's School Improvement and Intervention Section through ALEAT. ADE will use evidence provided by the LEA in the data summary to determine if the priority or focus school is making sufficient progress in meeting established milestones and performance targets. ADE will provide the LEA and school feedback through ALEAT on their progress of meeting the school's targets.~~

If a priority or focus school is not demonstrating sufficient progress of performance targets or implementation of the selected intervention model or plan, a mid-course adjustment to the plan or a corrective action plan will result.

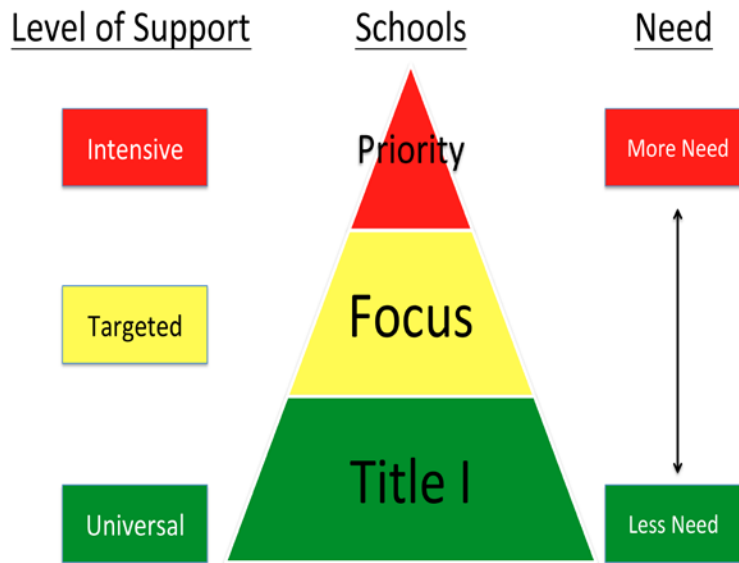
ADE may request additional documentation from the LEA or employ more intensive support or monitoring (e.g. more frequent on-site monitoring, fiscal monitoring, etc.) as deemed necessary by ADE staff. In addition, ADE as part of its accountability and technical assistance responsibilities will schedule and implement targeted compliance monitoring reviews at any time during the year when potential programmatic or fiscal concerns have become apparent.

### ***Technical Assistance***

ADE has refined its systems and processes to provide technical assistance and professional learning for LEAs in supporting and holding accountable LEAs, priority and focus schools with leadership, effective staffing, instructional infrastructure and differentiated support **and accountability** to significantly increase and sustain the performance of the LEA's failing and lowest performing schools and schools with the largest achievement gaps.

~~ADE's system of support and accountability for LEAs with priority schools is intended to create opportunities for LEAs to establish conditions to systematically support and sustain successful turnaround initiatives in priority schools. ADE understands that each priority school's readiness may vary and that there is no specific formula for turning around a school. In order for ADE to align and prioritize resources to support LEAs with priority schools in implementing and monitoring their chosen intervention model, schools are placed within a multi-tiered system of support. The multiple-tiered system of support was fashioned after the RTI Model with Universal, Targeted and Intensive levels. A multi-tiered approach ensures that the LEAs with the highest need schools receive the most intense support and assistance. As the need decreases, so does the intensity of support.~~

### **Figure 2.6: Multi-Tiered Support System for LEAs and Schools in Improvement Status**



Within the ADE School Improvement and Intervention Section there will be assigned staff ~~(turnaround specialists)~~ to specifically support LEAs with priority schools implementing one of the ~~four~~ SIG intervention models or the LEA's own plan for intervention that meets all of the turnaround principles. ~~In addition, to ensure support for the LEA in accomplishing their turnaround efforts, ADE's School Improvement and Intervention Section will form an ADE Technical Assistance and Oversight Team to address gaps in subgroup achievement. The members of this team will include ADE staff from the following sections: Exceptional Student Services, OELAS (staff that serve our English language learners), Title I staff representatives that focus on Low SES, Native Americans and parent involvement, Special Populations for migrant and homeless services, Career and Technical Education, K-12 Literacy, Title II, Dropout Prevention, and a staff person with Arizona's Charter School Board. This committee will ensure that staff with expertise in serving special populations and the state services provided can be easily accessed~~

Technical assistance and professional learning for LEAs with priority schools will be provided through on-site visits; desktop support; webinars and go-to meetings; and face to face workshops throughout the year. Support will be differentiated and focus on the following:

LEA and School Leadership:

- ✓ Effective system-wide infrastructure for quick, dramatic and sustainable improvement
- ✓ Resource alignment-(fiscal, human, programs) to assist LEA and school leadership in strategic decision making to support development and implementation of LEA and School continuous improvement plans
- ✓ Identifying dramatic achievement and leading indicator performance targets for all students that will ultimately lead to meeting the established exit criteria
- ✓ Developing, implementing and monitoring continuous improvement processes that are systematic, systemic and sustainable and will lead to increases in student achievement

Effective Staffing:

- ✓ Principal Turnaround Competencies
- ✓ Teacher Turnaround Competencies
- ✓ Effective strategies to recruit, replace or retain skilled staff
- ✓ Effective and rigorous evaluation and observation
- ✓ Support plans for struggling teachers

*Instructional Infrastructure:*

- ✓ Data-driven instruction-improving a school's instructional capacity
- ✓ Aligned and rigorous curriculum
- ✓ Balanced assessment strategy (summative, interim, formative)
- ✓ Data systems and analysis
- ✓ Effective intervention systems-

*Differentiated Support and Accountability:*

- ✓ Readiness Assessment
- ✓ LEA support and accountability structures for schools
- ✓ Continuous improvement plan development, implementation and monitoring of proven effective strategies and action steps that align with the chosen intervention model (these strategies and action steps are above and beyond the typical Title I plan) and are likely to lead to dramatic gains in improvement
- ✓ Operational Flexibility

ADE has also refined its systems and processes to provide targeted technical assistance and professional learning for LEAs in supporting and holding accountable LEAs and focus schools for implementing interventions aligned to the turnaround principles that adequately address the reason why a school has been identified as a focus school, and to ensure that the academic needs of students in each of the subgroups are met. In order for ADE to align and prioritize resources to support LEAs with focus schools in implementing and monitoring interventions, focus schools are placed within the same multi-tiered system of support as priority schools.

Within the ADE School Improvement and Intervention Section there will be assigned staff to specifically support LEA's with focus schools implementing interventions aligned to the turnaround principles. In addition to school improvement staff, ADE ~~Technical Assistance and Oversight Team~~ will develop collaborative support teams to assist focus schools that are identified due to the performance of English learners and students with disabilities in addressing the needs of those students. Technical assistance and professional learning for LEA's with focus schools will be provided by the support teams through on-site visits; desktop support; webinars and go-to meetings; and face to face workshops throughout the year. Support will be differentiated for different levels of schools (elementary, middle, and high) and the different types of school needs (e.g., all-students, targeted at the lowest-achieving students). LEAs with focus schools will also have access to the same supports described for priority schools based on the focus school needs.

- ii. **ensuring sufficient support for implementation of interventions in priority schools, focus schools, and other Title I schools identified under the SEA's ii. differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system (including through leveraging funds the LEA was previously required to reserve under ESEA section 1116(b)(10), SIG funds, and other Federal funds, as permitted, along with State and local resources);**

### *Financial Resources*

LEAs with priority schools will be required to set aside sufficient funds, particularly their Title I allocation, to implement the turnaround principles in their priority schools. LEAs implementing a continuous improvement plan in priority schools will be required to operate a school wide program in their Title I school without meeting the 40 percent poverty threshold in ESEA section 1114(a)(1). In addition, the school must notify parents within the attendance area of the priority school of the school's status.

LEAs with focus schools will be required to set aside sufficient funds, particularly their Title I allocation, to implement the targeted interventions in their identified focus schools. An LEA must implement student-based financial decision making models and strategies to ensure that funds are effectively and efficiently used to address the reason for identification and improve the performance of low-performing students and reduce achievement gaps among subgroups, including English Learners and students with disabilities. LEAs with focus schools will be required to operate a school wide program in their Title I school without meeting the 40 percent poverty threshold in ESEA section 1114(a)(1). In addition, the school must notify parents within the attendance area of the focus school of the school's status.

One of the key accomplishments identified through the ESEA monitoring was the collaboration efforts between the ADE Exceptional Student Services Section and the School Improvement and Intervention Section on behalf of focus schools. Specifically, "To support focus schools in targeting interventions to address schools' needs, ADE's Office of Exceptional Student Services (ESS) reviewed focus schools, which were identified based on the performance of the bottom quartile of students, for high concentrations of students with disabilities within that bottom quartile. ESS created a grant program specifically for these schools to be able to target interventions toward supporting students with disabilities." In an effort to continue this type of collaborative support for priority and focus schools, ADE will continue to seek funding opportunities for both priority and focus schools through Title II, III, IDEA, 21st CCLC, and CTE.

LEAs will not be required to set aside funds for Supplemental Educational Services (SES); however, LEAs will be required to increase instructional time for students and teacher collaboration time or provide tutoring services. This could be accomplished by utilizing existing time more strategically in order to increase academic engaged time, or adding more minutes to core subjects, or adding more days to the school calendar.

LEAs will be required to offer School Choice and set aside a sufficient amount to provide transportation to students that participate in School Choice. However, if there are unused/unencumbered funds, the LEA may reallocate excess set aside funds towards increasing student achievement after the first semester. If a school exits priority or focus status but has been

providing School Choice and transportation to students, these options must continue as long as the child is enrolled in that school.

The amounts that LEAs will be required to set aside will vary widely, due to the variety of sizes and location of schools within LEAs in Arizona. We anticipate that a significant number of LEAs with priority and/or Focus Schools will not have School Choice options to present to parents because they are a single site LEA (as are most charters) or have only one school per grade span. In rural areas distance to the transfer school, if one exists, is often a prohibitive factor in parent decisions. Larger urban LEAs may only need a small proportion of funds relative to the small number of schools that are eligible.

To justify the set aside amount when the LEA submits its Title I budget, it must indicate the number of students in the priority /and or focus schools who are eligible to transfer, the number of students exercising the Choice option, and an estimation of the cost of transportation to be provided. (Note: Title I funds may only pay for the additional cost of transportation.) LEAs may indicate that there is no additional cost for transferring students because of existing intra-LEA options. However, LEAs must agree to increase availability of funding if an increase in demand occurs after the budget is approved but within the LEA's deadlines.

ADE has conferred with the Title I COP and has proposed guidance for LEAs on the uses of previously reserved funds. The COP will continue to meet to discuss emerging strategies and technologies to serve our unique rural and remote areas. LEAs will not be required to set aside funds for Supplemental Educational Services (SES) as defined in Section 1116(e)(1). The following is guidance (reviewed by the COP) that will be provided to LEAs that no longer are under the requirement to offer SES.

### **Notice to LEAs with Title I funds that were formerly set aside for SES**

Please note the following requirements:

- A. From Title I funds that were formerly set aside for SES, an LEA must ensure that it takes those funds into account when providing equitable services to eligible private school students to the same extent and under the same conditions as required for Title I funds. Note: Equitable services obligations may be incurred if the LEA uses these funds for additional Title I-funded instruction, professional development or parent involvement activities. The equitable services requirement does not apply to funds set aside off-the-top for interventions in Priority and/or Focus Schools.  
Reallocating former SES funds – LEAs have two options for reallocating former set asides – 1) increasing the per pupil amount (PPA) to Title I participating schools or serving additional schools in rank order, or 2) reserving funds off the top of the Title I allocation for allowable Title I activities – for example, extra funds to priority or focus schools to implement interventions.
- B. Additional funds to schools will allow schools to:
  - Revise school plans and programs –
    - i. by using a continuous improvement process that includes a longitudinal analysis of achievement results, for all students and subgroups, including ELL and SPED

that identifies gaps in student performance against the AMOs; review of root cause analyses to allow priorities to surface; establish progress monitoring of the implementation of the plan; and

Expand Title I programs to serve more students or provide more intensive, extended learning services.

- i. Additional funds to schools will provide added resources that may be used to better meet the needs of students, as presented in the data analysis; improvement, corrective action, or restructuring efforts, though no longer mandated, may be enhanced or expanded with additional resources, if determined to fit the needs of the students

Add job-embedded professional development for Title I teachers at the school level to address the determined priorities of teacher needs that surface from the data analysis; an evaluation of previous PD efforts will also determine whether to continue, expand, or revise the kind of PD for the staff; monitoring of the impact of PD on student results.

- C. Increase LEA level support programs based on established priorities will allow the LEA to:

Support the continuous improvement process by schools, including data collection and analysis, resource allocation, planning, etc., so that schools have the support to implement a continuous improvement process that results in a viable school plan; monitoring of school's progress in implementing their plans; differentiate support for the continuous improvement process based on student performance, so that struggling schools, especially any Priority or Focus Schools, receive the appropriate assistance.

Extend job embedded professional development, such as coaching, for Title I schools, based on the needs that are evident in the data analysis; monitor the impact of PD on student results; coordinate with LEA-level PD activities that support implementation of Arizona's ~~Common Core~~ Standards, including Race to the Top, Title II-A and Title III funds.

Add or expand preschool services, summer school or other extended learning programs at the LEA level, determined by the analysis of both trend data of student achievement and monitoring of student progress throughout the year; the Title I Unit will consult with the COP to review the research and emerging best practices on extended learning to guide LEAs and schools so that the Title I program models selected meet the needs of the academically struggling groups of students, particularly those are not meeting AMOs.

### *Use of External Providers*

In addition to the supports provided by ADE staff, LEAs with priority schools will have an opportunity through their grant funding to request an Implementation Specialist to provide frequent and intensive technical assistance and job-embedded learning. LEAs with focus schools will have an opportunity through grant funding to request an Implementation Specialist to provide frequent and intensive technical assistance related to the school's reason for identification and job-embedded



learning. LEAs with priority and focus schools who have requested an Implementation Specialists will have a minimum of 10 on-site technical assistance visits each year at the LEA and school site.

*ADE Approved Implementation Specialist:* LEA and School Improvement Implementation Specialists (IS) are contracted ADE providers to provide **on-site support** for LEA's and schools in developing, implementing and monitoring continuous improvement plans and processes aligned to the selected intervention model and in deepening capacity to implement processes that are systematic, systemic and sustainable leading to substantial increases in student achievement. If the LEA request an IS, the LEA will need to sign a letter authorizing ADE to utilize a portion of the LEA's school improvement grant assistance funds to assign an IS to the priority school. ~~See Attachment 2.G for a description of IS roles and responsibilities.~~ An ADE approved Implementation Specialist is an optional resource and will not affect a LEA's ability to receive or be awarded funds.

SII has worked hard to build relationships with Arizona's current priority schools and to be a visible part of the improvement process providing technical assistance, professional development and monitoring. At the beginning of the School Improvement Grant process, SII staff made monthly onsite visits. By the second year of SIG, this was becoming difficult to maintain as ADE added the 2010 schools. As a result, ADE took a closer look at the work of the external providers who were working in Arizona's SIG schools. In the spring of 2010, SII did a Request for Proposals in order to create a list of vetted external providers that would be available to Arizona's SIG LEAs and schools. ADE received 37 proposals and approved 33 of them. SII's Deputy Associate Superintendent held face-to-face meetings and webinars to clearly communicate SII expectations for their work in the SIG schools. At the time, ADE was not in a position to require the use of specific external providers, but if an LEA chose a provider from the list, they could bypass their own lengthy procurement process.

Before an external provider can be hired with school improvement funds, the LEA needs to submit a scope of work, and describe how they will evaluate the effectiveness of the provider, and how the provider will address one or more needs cited in the LEA and/or school improvement plan. As Arizona LEAs and schools work with their current external providers, SII is paying closer attention to the evaluation plans that are in place to help determine impact of the provider on the improvement of the LEA and school. SII is also working with ADE's Research and Evaluation Section to develop an evaluation tool that can be used to evaluate this impact.

In the meantime, in some cases ADE needs to encourage LEAs to consider working with an external provider, so a [guidance document](#) has been created for LEAs and schools to use.

### ***Differentiated System of Support***

With A.R.S §15-241 providing the foundation, over the last two years, Arizona has redesigned and implemented a strong system for intervening in schools and LEAs identified as lowest performing in the state under both accountability systems. The system of support has been enhanced each year to meet the needs and demands of the LEAs and schools (Charters and Traditional) in improvement status under the state and federal accountability systems. Revisions to the system have, also, occurred based on newly released research and lessons learned during the previous year's implementation of the federal School Improvement Grant 1003g. One lesson that had a big impact on the support system was that data has to drive the differentiation of support. The team tried to

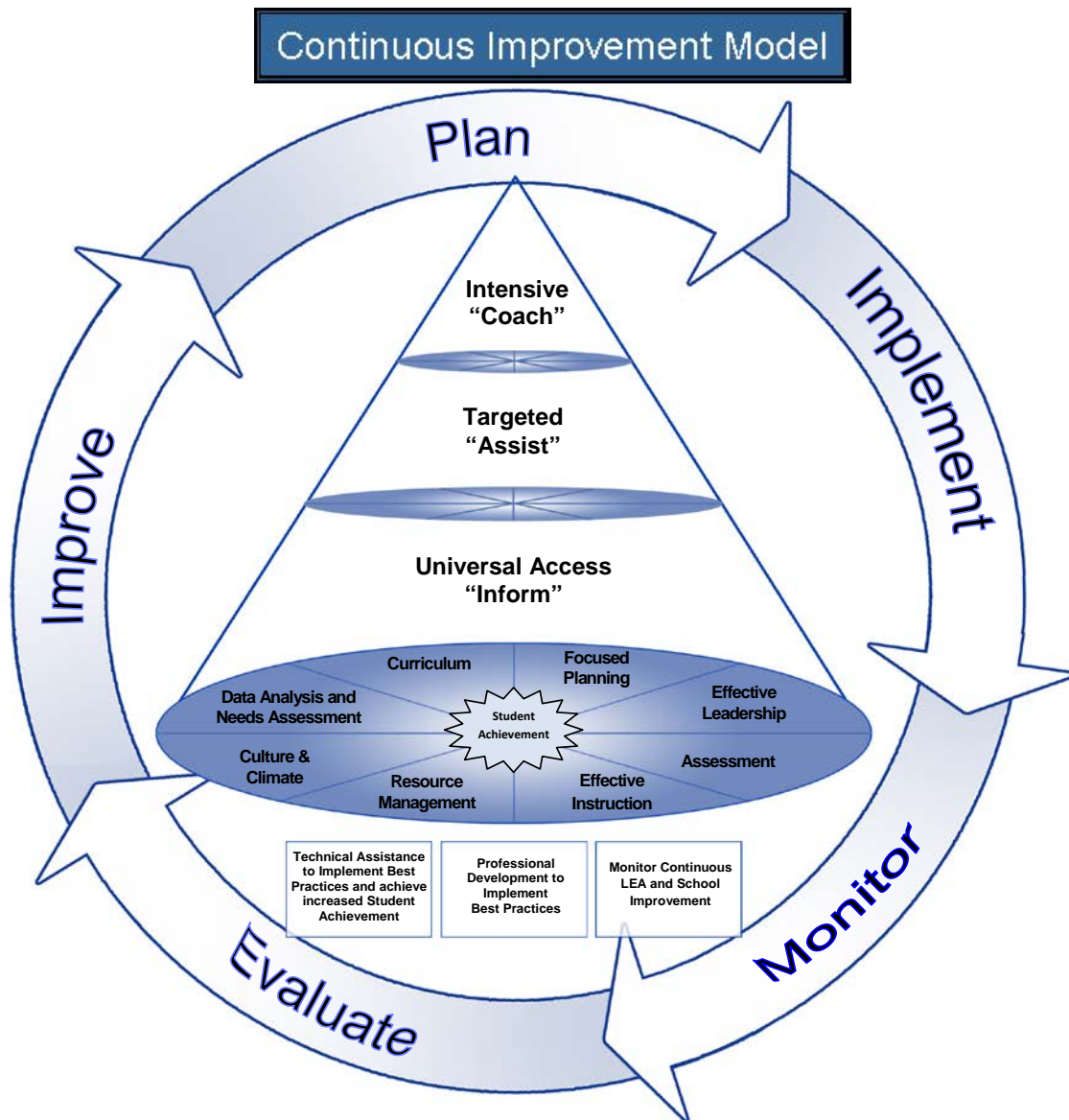


tier schools based on the School Improvement categories alone without success. To strengthen the support system the team began to use student performance data to assist with identifying the appropriate tier for all schools. A multi-tiered approach ensures that the highest needs schools receive the most intense support and assistance. The enhanced system of supports provides the necessary assistance for struggling schools to succeed with all students including students with disabilities and ELLs.

The use of a multi-tiered system of support is a dramatic operational change from the “one size fits all” system previously in place. The enhanced system of support was founded on a wealth of current educational reform research and experience with Arizona LEAs and schools. The transformation over the last two years demonstrates that Arizona has already been on the path to reform. The flexibility afforded within the request would provide Arizona the opportunity to take the next step and allow the state to make improvements where before there were barriers.

Schools and LEAs are placed within a multi-tiered system of support. The multiple-tiered system of support was fashioned after the RTI Model with Universal, Targeted and Intensive levels. The theory behind the RTI model is that students with the greatest need receive the greatest amount of intensive support in an effort to break the pattern of risk and accelerate student learning up to grade level (low risk status). This same theory can be applied to Arizona’s schools and LEAs in improvement status. The LEAs and schools with the greatest need receive the greatest amount of technical assistance and professional development. Oversight and monitoring of intervention implementation, use of funds and compliance on requirements and regulation is also increased. As the need decreases, so does the intensity of support and progress monitoring of implementation. Arizona has created a Differentiated Statewide System of Support and Accountability that addresses the needs of all the schools in the state.

**Figure 2G.v Continuous Improvement Model**



- iii. holding LEAs accountable for improving school and student performance, particularly for turning around their priority schools

### *Accountability*

This is an area in which SII has made great progress as a result of working with Arizona's lowest performing schools. ADE has sought to hold schools and LEAs accountable by providing them with timely feedback that features opportunities for robust, two-way communication regarding progress in implementing their improvement plans and student achievement. SII believes that if ADE is asking LEAs and schools to be data-driven, ADE should be operating that way, as well. Through evidence collected during the monitoring process previously described, ADE will hold

LEAs with priority and focus schools accountable for:

- establishing bold annual performance targets and milestones for student achievement, school culture and teacher performance;
- making sufficient progress on meeting established annual performance targets and milestones;
- full and effective implementation of the selected intervention model for priority schools and full and effective implementation of the selected interventions aligned to the appropriate turnaround principles for focus schools, including but not limited to principle (v): using data to inform instruction, that address the focus schools reason for identification in order to ensure that focus schools are effectively improving the performance of low-performing students and reducing achievement gaps among subgroups, including English Learners and students with disabilities;
- development, implementation and monitoring of LEA and School continuous improvement plans which include required priority and focus interventions
- fiscal and programmatic compliance

The ADE School Improvement and Intervention Section has included objectives in the ADE strategic plan focused on priority and focus schools meeting the school's annual performance targets for student achievement, school culture and teacher performance. By including these objectives in the ADE strategic plan the SII team will ensure that all methods used to support and hold LEAs accountable are aligned to meeting school performance targets and school improvement exit criteria.

If a priority or focus school is not demonstrating sufficient progress on performance targets, milestones or implementation of the selected intervention model or plan, a mid-course adjustment to the plan or a corrective action plan will result. ADE may request additional documentation from the LEA or employ more intensive support or monitoring (e.g. more frequent on-site monitoring, fiscal monitoring, etc.) as deemed necessary by ADE staff. In addition, ADE, as part of its accountability and technical assistance responsibilities, will schedule and implement targeted compliance monitoring reviews at any time during the year when potential programmatic or fiscal concerns have become apparent.

For LEAs with priority schools that continue to demonstrate insufficient progress on performance targets, implementation of the selected model or are resistive to implementing the interventions, ADE will re-evaluate capacity to determine continuation of school improvement funding, if received. If the LEA does not provide evidence of implementation within 6 months of the corrective action plan, the school improvement grant funds will be discontinued.

Pursuant to A.R.S §15-241 (V), ADE is required to evaluate LEAs with schools that have been assigned an F letter grade "to determine if the school failed to properly implement its school improvement plan, align the curriculum with academic standards, provide teacher training, prioritize the budget or implement other proven strategies to improve academic performance." Upon discontinuation of school improvement grant funds, the Department, pursuant to A.R.S §15-241(V), "shall submit to the [SBOE] a recommendation...that the school be subject to a public hearing to determine if the school failed to properly implement its improvement plan."

Upon the ADE's recommendation to hold a public hearing, pursuant to A.R.S §15-241(W) the

SBOE is required to meet and, “may provide by a majority vote at the public hearing for the continued operation of the school as allowed by this subsection. The [SBOE] shall determine whether governmental, nonprofit and private organizations may submit applications to the [SBOE] to fully or partially manage the school. The [SBOE's] determination shall include:

1. If and to what extent the local governing board may participate in the operation of the school including personnel matters.
2. If and to what extent the state board of education shall participate in the operation of the school.
3. Resource allocation pursuant to subsection Y of this section.
4. Provisions for the development and submittal of a school improvement plan to be presented in a public meeting at the school.
5. A suggested time frame for the alternative operation of the school.”

Additionally, A.R.S §15-241(X) requires the SBOE to: "periodically review the status of a school that is operated by an organization other than the school district governing board to determine whether the operation of the school should be returned to the school district governing board. Before the [SBOE] makes a determination, the [SBOE] or its designee shall meet with the school district governing board or its designee to determine the time frame, operational considerations and the appropriate continuation of existing improvements that are necessary to assure a smooth transition of authority from the other organization back to the school district governing board."

A.R.S §15-241(Z) provides for revocation of a charter school's charter if the SBOE determines that a charter school failed to properly implement its improvement plan.

For LEAs with focus schools that continue to demonstrate insufficient progress on performance targets, implementation of the selected interventions aligned to the turnaround principles that address the reason for identification, or are resistive to implementing the interventions ADE will:

- Evaluate the implementation of the selected interventions as well as the health of the LEA and school systems. Determine if school should be reclassified to priority school status based on the thorough examination of the LEA and school systems.
- If the LEA does not provide evidence of quality implementation and results within six months, school improvement grant funding will be discontinued and/or Title IA funds will be placed on a programmatic hold.
- If ADE determines that the school should be reclassified as a priority school, the LEA must then meet all priority schools requirements.
  - a. If the school is a Charter School, ADE will notify the Charter authorizer and the Arizona Charter Schools Board of the reclassification.

**Explain how this process is likely to succeed in improving SEA, LEA, and school capacity.**

The differentiated system of support and accountability that is currently in place is built on the belief that all levels of the education system, federal, state, district, school and classroom need to be partners in the hard work of improving learning environments for all students. Together the components provide for a strong system of support through guidance for planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating, and supporting continuous improvement efforts throughout the system.

Most of the components are already in place and data shows they are making a difference for many

of Arizona's lowest performing schools. Based on 2011 data, twelve of the nineteen Cohort 1 schools implementing the Turnaround or Transformation models (aligned to the turnaround principles) showed increases in percent of student proficiency on state standards and student growth. In addition, nine of the twelve high schools increased their graduation rate (Cohort average 2010 45%, 2011 60%). Based on 2013 data, 80% of Cohort 1 SIG schools showed an increase in percent passing in both reading and mathematics from 2010-2013 with the average growth at 15.50%. Based on 2013 data, 92% of Cohort 2 SIG schools showed an increase in percent passing in both reading and mathematics from 2010-2013 with the average growth at 15%. From 2012-2013, priority and focus schools also showed improvement in their letter grades based on Arizona's A-F Accountability System. There was a 14.8% reduction in the number of schools designated with a D and/or F label.

ADE continues to refine its differentiated system of support and accountability based on outcome data and lessons learned. ADE is committed to creating, improving, and sustaining effective systems that will support and hold accountable the state, LEAs, schools, and ultimately classrooms to be the best so all of Arizona students have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Through the methods that ADE has described regarding differentiated recognition, support and accountability for all schools to be able to improve, LEAs and schools will have the capacity to sustain the improvement efforts beyond ADE's involvement.

## PRINCIPLE 3: SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION AND LEADERSHIP

### 3.A DEVELOP AND ADOPT GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide the corresponding description and evidence, as appropriate, for the option selected.

<b>Option A</b>	<b>Option B</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> If the SEA has not already developed and adopted all of the guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the SEA’s plan to develop and adopt guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems by the end of the 2011–2012 school year;</li> <li>ii. a description of the process the SEA will use to involve teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines; and</li> <li>iii. an assurance that the SEA will submit to the Department a copy of the guidelines that it will adopt by the end of the 2011–2012 school year (see Assurance 14).</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If the SEA has developed and adopted all of the guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. a copy of the guidelines the SEA has adopted (Attachment 3-10) and an explanation of how these guidelines are likely to lead to the development of evaluation and support systems that improve student achievement and the quality of instruction for students;</li> <li>ii. evidence of the adoption of the guidelines (Attachment 3-11); and</li> <li>iii. a description of the process the SEA used to involve teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines.</li> </ul>

Arizona clearly understands and is well poised to implement a system that measures and values educator effectiveness. The foundations were laid by the historic school personnel and employment reforms in 2009, which removed seniority as a consideration for employment decisions and the educator evaluation requirements established by SB 1040 in 2010, championed by then Senator Huppenthal, ~~is now the current~~ then served as the State Superintendent of Public Instruction from 2011-2015.

Codified as Arizona Revised Statute §15-203(A)(38), this law states:

*“The State Board of Education shall... ”on or before December 15, 2011 adopt and maintain a model framework for a teacher and principal evaluation instrument that **includes quantitative data on student academic progress that accounts for between thirty-three percent and fifty percent of the evaluation outcomes and best practices for professional development and evaluator training**. School districts and charter schools shall use an instrument that meets the data requirements established by the*



*State Board of Education to annually evaluate individual teachers and principals beginning in school year 2012 – 2013.”<sup>11</sup>*

As a result, the State Board formed the Task Force on Teacher and Principal Evaluation on June 28, 2010. Membership included a district superintendent, a district principal, a high school teacher, an elementary teacher, a special education teacher, a charter school teacher, a charter school principal, the Deans of the Colleges of Education from the three state universities, a county school superintendent, representatives from the Governor’s Office, Arizona State Board of Education, Arizona Department of Education (ADE), Arizona Charter School Association, STAND for Children, Arizona Business and Education Coalition (ABEC), Arizona School Administrators (ASA), Arizona Education Association (AEA), and the Arizona School Board Association (ASBA). Teachers and principals had a strong voice in the development of the Framework. Their perspectives were valued and greatly influenced the work of the Task Force.

The Model Framework was adopted by the State Board of Education on April 25, 2011<sup>12</sup> (see Attachment 3-11 - *SBE minutes of framework adoption 04-25-11*) and consists of three required components:

- 1) 33%-50% tied to student quantitative data;
- 2) Optional 17% tied to school-level and/or system-level data; and
- 3) 50%-67% aligned to Teaching Performance / Instructional Leadership Performance, reflective of the InTASC teaching standards and ISSLC leadership standards<sup>13</sup> (see Attachment 3-10 - *Arizona Framework for Measuring Educator Effectiveness*).

While SB 1040 ~~offers~~ *offered* the state a solid foundation on which to begin, the Task Force took time to thoughtfully deliberate and bring the necessary components together. Prior to developing the Framework, the Task Force held a series of informational meetings from October 2010 through January 2011 to review the:

- Arizona Professional Teaching Standards;
- Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISSLC) Standards;
- State level data available in the Student Accountability Information System (SAIS);
- Research overview on Value Added and Growth Models;
- Inventory of Arizona academic assessments;
- Existing models for teacher and principal evaluations;
- Recommendations from the Arizona School Administrators and Arizona School Boards Association Task Force.

Two of the early critical steps were to clearly delineate (a) the beliefs of the Task Force concerning their work and (b) the specific goals to be accomplished by the framework and resulting LEA teacher and principal evaluation systems.

<sup>11</sup> [SB 1040](#)

<sup>12</sup> [April 25, 2011 State Board of Education minutes](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Arizona Framework for Measuring Educator Effectiveness](#)



The following Preamble set the context by which the Task Force worked:

*The members of the Task Force on Teacher and Principal Evaluation conducted our work in service to the students in Arizona’s public schools. We hold that the goal of both teacher and principal evaluation is to improve performance that yields higher quality education. Further, the work here submitted reflects our belief that evaluation is most effective as one part of a systemic approach to improving the performance that is critical to student success.*

**The goals of the Framework set forth by the Task Force are:**

- To enhance and improve student learning;
- To use the evaluation process and data to improve teacher and principal performance;
- To incorporate multiple measurements of achievement;
- To communicate clearly defined expectations;
- To allow districts and charter schools to use local instruments to fulfill the requirements of the framework;
- To reflect fairness, flexibility, and a research-based approach;
- To create a culture where data drives instructional decisions;
- To use the evaluation process and achievement data to drive professional development to enhance student performance;
- To increase data-informed decision making for students and teacher and principal evaluations fostering school cultures where student learning and progress is a continual part of redefining goals for all.

With the framework firmly in place the legislature took another bold step and on April 11, 2012 Governor Brewer signed HB 2823.<sup>14</sup> <sup>15</sup>The bill ~~will go into effect~~ became law on August 2, 2012 amending A.R.S. §15-203 and adding A.R.S. §15-537.01. HB 2823 addressed many issues but at its core solidified the nexus between the new evaluation systems and personnel decisions. Some of the key provisions include:

- Requires the State Board of Education to adopt four performance classifications of “highly effective,” “effective,” “developing” and “ineffective” and associated guidelines for school districts and charters to use in developing their evaluation instruments by December 1, 2012. Districts and charters must adopt their own definitions and begin to use these classifications in SY 2013-14.
- Addresses the need for local school district governing boards to address professional development opportunities with evaluations for both principals and teachers.
- Addresses and clarifies numerous school district personnel statutes including supports, contracts, and notification, transfer and dismissal policies.
- Requires school district teachers to be observed at least twice per year as part of the evaluation process, and requires that the observation be a complete and uninterrupted lesson. Requires that the first and last observation be separated by at least 60 calendar days,

<sup>14</sup> [HB 2823 Legislative Summary](#)

<sup>15</sup> [HB 2823 Chaptered Law](#)

- and requires written observation results to be provided within 10 business days.
- Requires the department to post best practices for implementation and assessment of teacher evaluation systems by September 15, 2012 that shall include:
  - Implementation process for teacher/principal evaluation systems.
  - Evaluation weightings.
  - Qualitative and quantitative elements used.
  - Methods by which the evaluations guide professional development.
  - Types of decisions for which the evaluations are used.
- Sets forth the parameters for the statewide model to be developed by ADE.
- Allows school districts or charter schools to elect to postpone full implementation of the teacher/principal evaluation until school year 2013-2014 of the governing board adopts a plan that includes a detailed timeline, a plan to engage teachers and other stakeholders and how evaluations will guide professional development, and ultimately the instrument to be considered.
- Requires that beginning in school year 2014-2015, individual performance on the evaluation account for not less than 33% of the performance pay distribution of Proposition 301 funds.

On May 20, 2013 the State Board of Education amended the definition of “academic progress” to meet the requirements of ESEA Flexibility and specify that the growth calculation shall comprise at least 20% of the total evaluation outcome. In Arizona, the State Board of Education is constitutionally and statutorily solely vested with the authority to make such changes. ~~Forty-five days after~~ After receipt of the final USED letter in November 2013, the Arizona Department of Education ~~will submit~~ submitted a timeline to clarify the role of statewide assessments for teachers of tested grades and subjects and principals as well as the use of classroom versus school-level data.

The West Comprehensive Center (WCC) at WestEd is also a critical partner with ADE in the planning and hosting of ~~three~~ six major statewide Educator Evaluation Summits tied to the Framework. ADE has adopted WCC’s format of presentations by national experts along with ample LEA time to reflect and plan. The foundation of all ~~three~~ six Summits reflects the eight components of the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality’s *A Practical Guide to Designing Comprehensive Teacher Evaluation Systems*. Additionally, ADE ~~has~~ called on the five newly formed Regional Education Centers to facilitate the working sessions during the Summits. By working with the LEA teams from their regions during the Summits, these Centers ~~will be~~ are able to provide more focused technical assistance and support to all regional LEAs. ~~LEAs that have attended all three summits will have a plan developed to align their teacher/principal evaluation system to the Framework and be ready for implementation in the 2012-2013 school year.~~

Helping Arizona understand what is happening in other states has been the ~~WCC facilitation~~ focus of regional workshops as well. An Arizona cohort comprised of a state senator, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Executive Director and representatives of the State Board, district and charter school administrators, ADE leadership, and representatives from the Arizona Charter School Association, School Boards Association, School Administrators Association, the Education Association, and the Governor’s Office have participated in a series of workshops conducted by the WCC. In these workshops, focused on improving student achievement through teacher and principal evaluations tied to student academic progress, teams from the five states served by the Center—Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada, and Utah—meet to a) hear the national

perspective, b) learn about the work each state is doing in this area, and c) collaborate as a state team to move this work forward in Arizona.

Having achieved key milestones, such as the passage of SB 1040 and HB 2823, establishment of the Arizona Framework for Measuring Educator Effectiveness by the Arizona State Board of Education, and successful ADE hosted Summits, Arizona's LEAs have a roadmap for the development of educator evaluation systems that focus on improving teaching and learning. (See Table 3A.1: Implementation Timelines and Key Milestones). The Highly Effective Teachers and Leaders Division of the ADE is committed to providing LEAs with the technical assistance and support necessary to implement this framework.

This will be accomplished by:

- ~~A~~ Continuing the series of Arizona Educator Evaluation Summits sponsored in partnership by ADE, WestEd's West Comprehensive Center and the Regional Education Centers;
- ADE Title IIA staff will ~~continue to~~ provide technical assistance and support to LEAs as they implement their teacher and principal evaluation systems aligned with the Framework;
- Awareness ~~Communications~~ communications and ~~Trainings~~ trainings; and,
- The development of a Statewide Teacher and Principal Evaluation Model that LEAs may opt to use if they do not wish to develop their own evaluation system aligned to the Arizona Framework for Evaluating Educator Effectiveness.

**Table 3A.1: Implementation Timeline and Milestones**

<b>Spring 2010:</b>	Governor signs SB1040
<b>June 28, 2010:</b>	State Board appoints members of the Task Force to develop the framework for Teacher and Principal Evaluation Systems.
<b>April 25, 2011:</b>	The State Board adopts the Arizona Framework for Evaluating Educator Effectiveness. <del>The ADE begins awareness trainings across the state.</del> ADE informed stakeholders through trainings across the state.
<b>November 13 &amp; 14, 2011:</b>	ADE, in partnership with the Southwest Comprehensive Center at WestEd and in collaboration with the Regional Education Centers hosted <del>its first Summit to Improve Teaching and Learning. Using Multiple Measures in a Comprehensive System to Improve Teaching and Learning. Four hundred district and charter representatives attend.</del> Information on this and subsequent Summits is included in Section 3B.

<b>December, 2011:</b>	ADE begins development of the Arizona Teacher & Principal Evaluation Model.
<b>February 26 &amp; 27, 2012:</b>	ADE, <del>in partnership with the Southwest Comprehensive Center at WestEd and in collaboration with the Regional Education Centers</del> hosts collaborates to Summit II, <del>Using Student Performance Measures in a Comprehensive System to Improve Teaching and Learning</del> . This Summit will addressed the use of student performance measures in tested and non-tested subjects, with significant focus on options for “Group B” teachers—non-tested subjects and special populations. It is anticipated that 600 district and charter representatives will attend.
<b>March, 2012:</b>	ADE <del>will</del> begins a discussion with the State Board to amend the Framework to include the requirement of at least 3 performance levels.
<b>April 29 &amp; 30, 2012</b>	ADE, <del>in partnership with the Southwest Comprehensive Center at WestEd and in collaboration with the Regional Education Centers</del> hosts Summit III, <del>Using Evaluation Data in a Comprehensive System to Improve Teaching and Learning</del> . This Summit will focused on the use of the data to inform professional development, make informed decisions regarding placement, advancement, and incentives, etc., and as well as provide evidence of the impact of the Framework on state, district, school and student outcomes. It is anticipated that 600 district and charter representatives will attend. The LEAs who have participated in all three summits will leave with an action plan to implement their teacher/principal evaluation system aligned to the Framework in the 2012-2013 school year.
<b>Fall 2012:</b>	Pilot the Arizona Teacher & Principal Evaluation Model. Information regarding this model may be found at: <a href="http://www.azed.gov/teacherprincipal-evaluation/teacher/">www.azed.gov/teacherprincipal-evaluation/teacher/</a> (See Attachment 3A.1: <u>2.0 Plan of Action for Development of Statewide Teacher and Principal Evaluation Model</u> ).

Summer, 2012:	ADE provides training and technical support to LEAs adopting the Arizona Teacher & Principal Evaluation Model
September, 2012:	ADE, in partnership with REL WestEd <del>will work to</del> determined the effectiveness of implementing the requirements of the Framework through a two year pilot project <del>that kicked off in September.</del>
February 23 & 24, 2013:	<del>ADE, in partnership with the West Comprehensive Center at WestEd hosts Summit IV, <i>Bridging Common Core Implementation to Educator Evaluation</i>. The focus of this summit was to provide tools and processes to bridge implementation of the state academic standards to educator evaluation systems aligned with the Framework.</del>
2013-2014 School Year:	All LEAs must use teacher and principal evaluation systems aligned to the Framework.
February 9 & 10 2014:	ADE hosts Summit V.
March 1 & 2, 2015	ADE hosts Summit VI.
<del>Ongoing: 2014-15 School Year</del>	ADE provides technical assistance to LEAs in the implementation of the Arizona Framework for Evaluating Educator Effectiveness. <del>In lieu of available AzMERIT (the adopted state assessment) data, LEAs are permitted to use other valid, reliable assessments aligned to standards. The requirement for state assessment data is planned to continue in 2016-17 following the collection of two years of data.</del>
<u>October 2015</u>	<u>Data from the first year of AzMERIT implementation is scheduled to be available in October 2015, approximately eight weeks after the State Board of Education sets the cut scores for the new assessment. The requirement for state assessment data to be included as part of the evaluation framework is planned to continue in 2016-17 following the collection of two years of data.</u>
<u>January/February 2016</u>	<u>Student growth percentiles from 2014 AIMS to 2015 AzMERIT available (tentative)</u>

<u>August 2016</u>	<u>Student growth percentiles from 2015 AzMERIT to 2016 AzMERIT available (tentative)</u>
<u>August 2017</u>	<u>Student growth percentiles, student growth targets, and any other growth model identified and approved for use in the state will be available (tentative)</u>

All the resources listed below, among others, have been on ADE’s Teacher-Principal Evaluation website and are specifically referenced in awareness trainings to LEAs, counties and associations. Additionally, ADE Summit workbooks are adapted from the NCTQ Practical Guide.

- A Practical Guide to Designing Comprehensive Teacher Evaluation Systems (National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, available at: <http://www.tqsource.org/publications/practicalGuideEvalSystems.pdf>).
- Measuring Student Growth for Teachers in Non-Tested Grades and Subjects: A Primer (Reform Support Network, available at: [http://www.swcompcenter.org/educator\\_effectiveness2/NTS\\_PRIMER\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.swcompcenter.org/educator_effectiveness2/NTS_PRIMER_FINAL.pdf)).
- Alternative Measures of Teacher Performance (National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, available at: [http://www.tqsource.org/pdfs/TQ\\_Policy-to-PracticeBriefAlternativeMeasures.pdf](http://www.tqsource.org/pdfs/TQ_Policy-to-PracticeBriefAlternativeMeasures.pdf)).
- Guide to Teacher Evaluation Products (National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, available at: <http://www3.learningpt.org/tqsource/GEP>).
- Measuring Teachers Contributions to Student Learning Growth for Non-tested Grades and Subjects (National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, available at: <http://www.tqsource.org/publications/MeasuringTeachersContributions.pdf>).

ADE is working to align and integrate efforts to implement and support both the implementation of the ~~new~~ college- and career-ready standards, and teacher and principal evaluation initiatives. Currently, ADE is developing a single, integrated plan to bring strategic cohesion to these major initiatives – which would include (but are not limited to) the development of aligned, common messaging and the integration of professional development and technical support efforts. A specific example of an action step from this process would include the collaborative (ADE standards and educator effectiveness staff, Regional Centers, and other stakeholders) development of a common tool/rubric for measuring the fidelity of implementation of the standards, which aligns with observation tools/instruments needed to support educator evaluation systems. In addition, ADE held ~~its fourth~~ AZ Educator Evaluation Summits in February 2013, 2014 and 2015 focusing on bridging ~~Common Core~~ instructional shifts in Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards with ~~and~~ educator evaluation systems.

**3.A.ii For any teacher and principal evaluation and support systems for which the SEA has developed and adopted guidelines, consistent with Principle 3, are they systems that:**

Arizona’s educator evaluation system meets all the waiver elements in Principle (3Aii a-f). The elements have been cross-walked in the chart at the end of this section with Arizona’s evaluation laws and rules (see Table 3.4). The guidelines were developed by the State Board appointed Task Force and adopted by the State Board as required in statute. The guidelines clearly delineate the role



of ADE (see page 32 of Attachment 3-10).

**a. Will be used for continual improvement of instruction?**

Continual improvement of instruction is the major tenet of Arizona’s new Framework. Both the law and adopted framework lay out expectations for the state and LEAs about the focus on improving instruction through improved teacher and principal performance. The goals stated in the Framework focus on improving student academic progress by continual improvement in instruction. This is accomplished by requiring that (a) quantitative student academic progress account for at least 33% of a teacher and principal’s evaluation and (b) the InTASC Professional Teaching Standards and the ISLLC Educational Leadership Standards be used in any adopted model that measures teacher and principal performance respectively. The State Board of Education adopted these educator performance standards as the Arizona Professional Teaching and Administrator Standards at its December 5, 2011, meeting.<sup>16</sup>

Furthermore, in “ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO LEAS” on page 20 of the Framework, LEAs are instructed to develop and provide professional development aligned with the Arizona Professional Teaching and Administrator Standards (See Attachment 3-10).

**b. Meaningfully differentiate performance using at least three performance levels?**

In line with HB2823, ADE’s requirement of mapping performance of teachers and principals to four levels has been included in ADE’s statewide awareness trainings and the feedback ADE has received post-trainings reflects that the majority of Arizona’s LEAs are aligning their evaluation systems to these 4 levels. The policy was delineated in a Communiqué to all LEAs in September 2011<sup>17</sup>.

“**Performance Levels** – One summative evaluation performance level will need to be determined for each teacher and principal on an annual basis. LEAs can use their own labels and number of performance levels; however, the ADE has identified the following four standardized categories for reporting purposes:

- **Highly effective**
- **Effective**
- **Developing**
- **Ineffective**

It will be the responsibility of the LEA to map their levels to the 4 performance levels identified by the ADE when reporting teacher and principal performance level data for EdFacts.”

These levels were adopted by school districts and charters into their evaluation instruments by December 1, 2012. ~~HB 2823 requires the State Board of Education to adopt four performance classifications of “highly effective,” “effective,” “developing,” and “ineffective” and associated guidelines for school districts and charters to use in developing their evaluation instruments by December 1, 2012.~~ Districts and charters must adopted their own definitions and begin to use began using these classifications in SY 2013-14.

<sup>16</sup> [State Board of Education December 5, 2011 minutes](#)

<sup>17</sup> [LEA Communiqué September 2011](#)



- c. Use multiple valid measures in determining performance levels, including as a significant factor data on student growth for all students (including English Learners and students with disabilities), and other measures of professional practice (which may be gathered through multiple formats and sources, such as observations based on rigorous teacher performance standards, teacher portfolios, and student and parent surveys).
  - (i) Does the SEA have a process for ensuring that all measures that are included in determining performance levels are valid measures, meaning measures that are clearly related to increasing student academic achievement and school performance, and are implemented in a consistent and high-quality manner across schools within the LEA?

The Framework requires that all LEAs use only valid and reliable data in their evaluations. Therefore, in the absence of valid classroom-level data, LEAs will be required to default to valid school-level data. The Framework acknowledges that this is not the ideal solution and, therefore, requires LEAs to develop quality valid and reliable assessments in those areas where currently none exist. The Framework defines validity as “The extent to which a test's content is representative of the actual skills learned and whether the test can allow accurate conclusions concerning achievement.” Eventually, this will transition all teachers out of Group B (non-tested subjects) and into Group A (tested subjects).

It should be acknowledged that the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grantee at the Maricopa County Education Service Agency has, through its assessment development team, developed and implemented eighteen content specific and twelve performance based assessments allowing 95% of the teachers in its eleven partner districts to have valid and reliable measurements of instruction.<sup>18</sup>

~~ADE currently does not have a process for ensuring all measures that are included in determining performance levels are valid measures. However, REL at WestEd will work with ADE to define these procedures as it begins the pilot of the state Teacher and Principal Evaluation Model to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the Framework.~~

- (ii) For grades and subjects in which assessments are required under ESEA section 1111(b)(3), does the SEA define a statewide approach for measuring student growth on these assessments?

With regard to educator evaluations, the statutory insertion of the words, “academic progress” as well as the adoption of the “A-F” Letter Grade methodology clearly indicates Arizona’s embrace of the value and necessity of measuring student growth. In fact, the “Measure of Academic Progress” has been a factor in Arizona’s academic accountability profiles since their inception in 2000. In the context of educator evaluations this philosophy is being balanced with Arizona’s history of local control and embrace of over ~~300~~ 500 unique charter school LEAs. This was also reflected in the goals of the framework as set forth by the Task Force. One was To allow districts and charter schools to use local instruments to fulfill the requirements of the framework and another was To reflect fairness, flexibility, and a research-based approach.

<sup>18</sup> \*MCESA: A Closer Look at Assessments 2014-15

A ~~recent~~ survey conducted by ADE asked LEAs if they have a planned set of assessments that they have decided to use to determine the learning growth of students by Group A teachers in 2012/2013. 148 LEAs responded to the question and 92% of the respondents stated “Yes”.

When the Framework was initially adopted and implemented, the definition of “academic progress” in the Framework included two options: 1) the amount of academic growth a student experiences during one school year; or 2) a single measure of academic performance. The paucity of data for our teachers in non-ESEA tested subjects and the immediate implementation timeframe mandated by the legislature was considered and the adopted definition of “academic progress” provided some flexibility. However, on May 20, 2013, the State Board of Education amended the definition of “academic progress” to meet the requirements of ESEA Flexibility and specify that the growth calculation shall comprise at least 20% of the total evaluation outcome.

Since LEAs are required by Arizona law to implement teacher and principal evaluation systems in the 2012-2013 school year, LEAs ~~will be~~ ~~were~~ allowed to amend their evaluation systems during the 2013-2014 school year to align with the ~~new~~ approved guidelines for implementation in 2014-2015.

While the Framework does require that growth comprise 20% of the total evaluation outcome, the Framework does not specifically prescribe an approach to measuring growth. However, the state has an approved growth measure embedded in its accountability system and is incorporating these growth measures in the state Teacher and Principal Evaluation Model.

Arizona ~~previously measured measures~~ student growth ~~on~~ with the ~~AIMS~~ ~~Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards test~~ in mathematics and in reading. ~~The state Arizona~~ uses a longitudinal student-level growth measure – Student Growth Percentiles (SGP) – that describes each student’s academic gains relative to academic peers over time. Growth is determined as the change in ~~AIMS-test~~ ~~assessment~~ scores from one year to the next, and this individual growth is then put into perspective by comparing it to the growth of other students across the state that began at the same starting point academically. Arizona’s growth model incorporates up to five previous years of test history in order to establish precise peer groups in reading and mathematics. Including a longitudinal student growth component into an accountability system is particularly important because it recognizes the degree to which the lowest achieving students strive to “gain ground” academically from one year to the next. For a school, the SGP acknowledges what a school does with the students they have and answers two questions: 1) “How well are our students scoring in relation to the scores of other students in the school / LEA?” and 2) “How have our struggling students improved over the past school year compared to their peers across the state?”

The adoption of AzMERIT as the new statewide assessment in November 2014 allows Arizona to continue SGP although a minimum of two years data will be necessary to establish a baseline to determine appropriate academic growth. Data from the first year of AzMERIT implementation is scheduled to be available in October 2015, approximately eight weeks after the State Board sets the cut scores for the new assessment. In Summer 2016, ADE will seek approval from the State Board for an approach to student growth that will be the same for all LEAs. At this time, it is unclear how that approach may be structured and what the options are, but it will apply uniformly to all educators. Following approval from the Board, the approach will be incorporated into final SY 2015-2016 ratings.

The calculation of SGP and the role of student growth in the state accountability system are discussed in detail in section 2.A.i. This measure of student growth is made available to each school in the state. A school can access their students' growth data from the SEA in Mathematics and in Reading content areas. These data were first made available to schools in the 2010-2011 school year, the first year in which Arizona calculated the SGP for accountability purposes.

During 2013 - 2014, schools using the Statewide Teacher and Principal Evaluation Model ~~will~~ implemented a definition of “academic progress” that ~~is~~ was consistent with the definition of student growth set forth in the document ESEA Flexibility. Consistent with the State Board adopted framework, the weighting of student growth ~~will be~~ is 20%.

Sixteen schools ~~will~~ participated in the model program and ~~will~~ used Student Growth Percentiles and Student Growth Targets. ADE ~~We will~~ also piloted a measure of growth for English Language proficiency assessments, as well as student learning objectives (SLOs) for both Group A and Group B teachers.

Full accountability and compliance also has a strong local component due to the statutory implications found in SB 1040 and HB 2823. The former laid the groundwork for the development of the evaluation systems and the latter tied many high-stakes personnel decisions and performance pay to the outcomes of the educator evaluations that must be aligned with the State Board adopted framework. For example, HB 2823 places limitations on teacher and principal transferability based on performance classifications dictated in statute.

Additionally, HB 2823 requires ADE to post best practices for implementation and assessment of teacher evaluation systems by September 15, 2012 that shall include:

- Implementation process for teacher/principal evaluation systems.
- Evaluation weightings.
- Qualitative and quantitative elements used.
- Methods in which the evaluations guide professional development.
- Types of decisions for which the evaluations are used.

**(iii) For grades and subjects in which assessments are not required under ESEA section 1111(b)(3), does the SEA plan to provide guidance to LEAs on what measures of student growth are appropriate, and establish a system for ensuring that LEAs will use valid measures?**

~~As referenced earlier,~~ ADE's second Arizona Educator Evaluation Summit (February 26-27, 2012), in partnership with WestEd and the Regional Education Centers, focused on the development and use of assessments for grades and subjects in which assessments are not required or readily available. This Summit, in particular, provided guidance to LEAs on appropriate student growth measures. WestEd ~~will~~ assisted ADE in establishing a process/system for ensuring LEAs ~~will~~ utilize valid and reliable measures through its evaluation of the Framework and the ~~pilot use~~ of the state Teacher and Principal Evaluation Model.

Arizona's Framework requires LEAs to use multiple measures in determining performance levels for

teachers with available classroom-level student achievement data that are valid and reliable, aligned to Arizona’s academic standards, and appropriate to individual teachers’ content areas (Group A teachers); teachers with limited or no available classroom-level student achievement data that are valid and reliable, aligned to Arizona’s academic standards, and appropriate to individual teachers’ content areas (Group B teachers); and principals. Tables 3A.2 and 3A.3 on the following pages detail these measures and the weights that must be given to each measure (See page 10 of Attachment 3-10).

**Table 3A.2 3-2: Teacher Evaluations**

	Classroom-Level Data	School-Level Data	Teaching Performance
<b>GROUP “A”</b> (Teachers with <u>available classroom-level student achievement data that are valid and reliable</u> , aligned to Arizona’s academic standards, and appropriate to individual teachers’ content areas.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State Administered Assessments</li> <li>AP, IB, Cambridge, ACT, Quality Core</li> <li>District/Charter-Wide Assessments</li> <li>District / School-level Benchmark Assessments, aligned with Arizona State Standards</li> <li>Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)</li> <li>Other valid and reliable classroom- level data</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Required:</u> Classroom-level elements shall account for at least 33% of the <u>total</u> evaluation outcomes.</b>  <b>*-AIMS data AzMERIT data, when available, shall be used as at least one of the classroom level data elements.</b></p> <p><i>The total measure of Academic Progress (classroom-level and/or school-level) shall include a calculation of Academic Growth. Academic Growth (using classroom-level and/or school-level data) shall comprise at least 20% of the total evaluation outcome.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State Administered Assessments (aggregate school, department, grade, or team level results)</li> <li>AP, IB, Cambridge, ACT, Quality Core (aggregate school, department or grade level results)</li> <li>Survey data</li> <li>Student Achievement Profiles</li> <li>Other valid and reliable school-level data e.g. grade level goals</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Optional:</u> School-level elements shall account for no more than 17% of the <u>total</u> evaluation outcomes.</b></p> <p><i>The total measure of Academic Progress (classroom-level and/or school-level) shall include a calculation of Academic Growth. Academic Growth (using classroom-level and/or school-level data) shall</i></p>	<p>Evaluation instruments shall provide for periodic classroom observations of all teachers. Districts and charters may develop their own rubrics for this portion of teacher evaluations; however, these rubrics shall be based upon national standards, as approved by the State Board of Education. **See standards below</p> <p><b><u>Required Teaching Performance results shall account for between 50 - 67% of the <u>total</u> evaluation outcomes.</u></b></p>

		<i>comprise at least 20% of the total evaluation outcome.</i>	
<p><b>GROUP “B”</b> (Teachers with <b><u>limited or no available classroom-level student achievement data that are valid and reliable,</u></b> aligned to Arizona’s academic standards, and appropriate to individual teachers’ content areas.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District / School Level Benchmark Assessments, aligned with Arizona State Standards</li> <li>• District/Charter-wide Assessments, if available</li> <li>• Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)</li> <li>• Other valid and reliable classroom-level data</li> </ul> <p><i>If available, these data shall be incorporated into the evaluation instrument. The sum of available classroom-level data and school-level data shall account for between 33% and 50% of the <u>total evaluation outcomes.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>The total measure of Academic Progress (classroom-level and/or school-level) shall include a calculation of Academic Growth. Academic Growth (using classroom-level and/or school-level data) shall comprise at least 20% of the total evaluation outcome.</u></i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State Administered Assessments (aggregate School, department, grade, or Team-level results)</li> <li>• AP, IB, Cambridge, ACT, Quality Core (aggregate school, department or grade- level results)</li> <li>• Survey data</li> <li>• Student Achievement Profiles</li> <li>• Other valid and reliable school-level data e.g. grade level goals</li> </ul> <p><i><u>Required: The sum of available school-level data and classroom-level data shall account for between 33% and 50% of the total evaluation outcomes.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>The total measure of Academic Progress (classroom-level and/or school-level) shall include a calculation of Academic Growth. Academic Growth (using classroom-level and/or school-level data) shall comprise at least 20% of the total evaluation outcome.</u></i></p>	<p>Evaluation instruments shall provide for periodic classroom observations of all teachers. Districts and charters may develop their own rubrics for this portion of teacher evaluations; however, these rubrics shall be based upon national standards, as approved by the State Board of Education. **See standards below</p> <p><i><u>Required Teaching Performance results shall account for between 50 - 67% of the <u>total evaluation outcomes.</u></u></i></p>

**\*\*Arizona Professional Teaching Standards (adopted by the State Board of Education December 5, 2011)**

**Teachers will be assessed on their skills, knowledge and dispositions in the following areas:**

Standard I: Learner Development.	Standard II: Learning Differences
Standard III: Learning Environments	Standard IV: Content Knowledge
Standard V: Innovative Applications of Content	Standard VI: Assessment
Standard VII: Planning Instruction	Standard VIII: Instructional Strategies
Standard IX: Reflection and Continual Growth	Standard X: Collaboration

**Table 3A.3: Principal Evaluations**

	School-Level Data	System / Program-Level Data	Instructional Leadership
<b>ALL PRINCIPALS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State Administered Assessments (aggregate school or grade level results)</li> <li>District/School Level Benchmark Assessments</li> <li>AP, IB Cambridge International, ACT Quality Core</li> <li>School Achievement Profiles</li> <li>Student achievement progress goals</li> <li>Other valid and reliable data</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Required:</i> School-level elements shall account for at least 33% of the <u>total</u> evaluation outcomes.</b></p> <p><b>*<del>AIMS data</del> AzMERIT data, when available, shall be used as at least one of the school level data elements.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The total measure of Academic Progress (classroom-level and/or school-level) shall include a calculation of Academic Growth. Academic Growth (using classroom-level and/or school-level data) shall comprise at least 20% of the total evaluation outcome.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey data</li> <li>Grade level data</li> <li>Subject area data</li> <li>Program data</li> <li>Student academic progress goals</li> <li>Other valid and reliable data</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Optional:</i> These elements shall account for no more than 17% of evaluation outcomes; however, the sum of these data and school-level data shall not exceed 50% of the <u>total</u> evaluation outcome</b></p>	<p>Evaluation instruments shall provide for periodic performance reviews of all principals. Districts and charters may develop their own rubrics for this portion of principal evaluations; however, these rubrics shall be based upon National standards, as approved by the State Board of Education.</p> <p><b>**See standards below</b></p> <p><b><i>Required:</i> Instructional Leadership results shall account for no more than 50 - 67% of the <u>total</u> evaluation outcomes.</b></p>

**\*\*Arizona Administrative Standards (adopted by the State Board of Education December 5,**



2011)

**Principals will be assessed on their skills and knowledge in:**

<b>Standard I</b>	The development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.
<b>Standard II</b>	Advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth
<b>Standard III</b>	Managing of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment
<b>Standard IV</b>	Collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.
<b>Standard V</b>	Acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner
<b>Standard VI</b>	Understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context

LEAs must align their teacher and principal evaluation systems to the Arizona Framework for Evaluating Educator Effectiveness. The ~~framework~~ Framework requires multiple valid and reliable measures be used to determine student academic progress. In addition, ADE's awareness trainings include identification of all available statewide valid and reliable student performance assessments, such as ~~AzMERIT~~, when available, ~~AIMS and AIMS-A (students with disabilities)~~, AZELLA (Arizona English Language Learner Assessment), ~~AIMS and AIMS-A (prior to 2014-15)~~ and other assessment data that LEAs utilize to determine student growth.

~~LEAs are provided AIMS data and the~~ The Arizona Framework requires the use of statewide data, which is provided to the LEAs when available, ~~(e.g., AIMS, SAT 10)~~ in the evaluation of teachers and principals. The LEAs also ensure that multiple data elements are used to calculate the portion of each teacher's evaluation dedicated to student academic progress.

To further support teachers and leaders of English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, ~~the~~ ADE has taken the following critical steps:

1. A cross-divisional Assessment Team ~~has been~~ was established to provide resources and models that support the development of valid and reliable assessments and other performance measures, tied to both Group A and Group B teachers, ELLs and students with disabilities. This ADE cross-divisional team co-facilitated the LEA working sessions tied to these assessment topics at ADE's Second Educator Evaluation Summit, ~~February 26-26, 2012 2/26/12-2/27/12~~<sup>19</sup>.
2. Summit II focused on LEA teams of both Group A and Group B teachers, including those who teach ELLs and students with disabilities (Reference Working Session II on February 27<sup>th</sup> from above Summit agenda).

#### **d. Evaluate teachers and principals on a regular basis?**

<sup>19</sup> [Summit II Agenda](#)



SB 1040 requires that LEAs “annually evaluate individual teachers and principals beginning in school year 2012-2013.”<sup>20</sup> In addition, ADE’s trainings include an emphasis on using multiple measures and multiple observations in all teacher and principal evaluations.

HB 2823 requires that teachers be observed at least twice per year as part of the evaluation process, and that the observation be a complete and uninterrupted lesson. The first and last observation must be separated by at least 60 calendar days and requires written observation results to be provided to the teachers within 10 business days.

**e. Provide clear, timely, and useful feedback, including feedback that identifies needs and guides professional development?**

- *Will the SEA’s guidelines ensure that evaluations occur with a frequency sufficient to ensure that feedback is provided in a timely manner to inform effective practice?*
- *Are the SEA’s guidelines likely to result in differentiated professional development that meets the needs of teachers?*

Arizona intends that evaluation data be used to guide professional development of teachers and principals, as demonstrated by language in SB1040 [now A.R.S §15-203(A)(38)]:

*The State Board of Education shall . . .”on or before December 15, 2011, adopt and maintain a model framework for a teacher and principal evaluation instrument that includes quantitative data on student academic progress that accounts for between thirty-three percent and fifty percent of the evaluation outcomes and best practices for professional development and evaluator training . . .”*

The Framework guidelines were designed to offer maximum flexibility for school districts and charter schools. ADE, through the work of the Professional Development Capacity Building Unit, does have the infrastructure in place to facilitate differentiated professional development focused on increasing student achievement. Over the past seven years, this unit has:

- Facilitated Professional Development Leadership Academies (PDLA). These academies, ~~which are~~ rooted in the National Staff Development Council Standards for Staff Development, increase the capacity of teacher-administrator teams to align educator learning with student learning needs and with related teacher learning needs to continually improve ~~that process~~ student achievement. These teams ~~are steeped in how to~~ clarify behavioral indicators of desired professional practices and how to check for their level of implementation.
- Through providing Title IIA grants to counties, developed strong partnerships with all fifteen County Education Service Agencies (ESA) to build regional professional development structures focused on data-based, results-driven professional development aligned with the national standards.
- Encouraged all LEAs, at no cost to them, to participate in the National Staff Development Council’s Standards Assessment Inventory. This inventory gives LEAs detailed feedback on how their teachers perceive the school conditions known to support effective professional development. Additionally, a tool kit has been developed to assist LEAs in the effective use this data to improve student achievement through improved teacher and leader performance has been made available to all LEAs. The kit was developed in partnership with NSDC

<sup>20</sup> [Senate Bill 1040](#)

(Learning Forward) and is available on ADE’s password-protected IDEAL portal. Both the PDLA teams and the ESA grants use Guskey’s five critical levels of evaluating professional development to determine the effectiveness of their professional development projects. The fifth level of Guskey’s model focuses on whether or not the professional development has led to increased student achievement.

- HB 2823 clarified the requirement for local school district governing boards to address professional development opportunities based off results from evaluations for both principals and teachers.

In addition, the SBE Task Force identified specific goals that include:

- To use the evaluation process and achievement data to drive professional development to enhance teaching, leadership and student performance
- As stated earlier, in “ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO LEAS” on page 20 of the Framework, LEAs are instructed to develop and provide professional development aligned with the Arizona Professional Teaching and Administrative Standards (See Attachment 3-10).

The current Framework emphasizes that evaluation is a *process* and aligns with the state’s training focus of “multiple measures, multiple observations,” with another Framework goal stating:

- “To use the evaluation process and data to improve teacher and principal performance”

Because Arizona values local control, the Framework allows LEAs flexibility regarding frequency of formative observations while the law requires an annual summative evaluation. However, the Framework is very clear that multiple observations be used to determine the summative evaluation. Tables 3.2 and 3.3 state that “Evaluation instruments shall provide for periodic classroom observations of all teachers.” and “Evaluation instruments shall provide for periodic performance reviews of all principals.” The Task Force strove to achieve balance between local flexibility and statutory requirements that evaluation data be used to drive professional development decisions.

#### **f. Will be used to inform personnel decisions?**

In 2009, HB 2011 enacted numerous reforms to school personnel statutes<sup>21</sup>. Most prominently it prohibited school districts and charter schools from adopting policies that give employment retention priority to teachers based on tenure or seniority. It also removed the requirement for school districts to give a preferred right of reappointment to teachers in the order of original employment. By default, these groundbreaking reforms have made evaluations the necessary and critical component in personnel decisions.

A.R.S §15-538 details the process for removing a teacher based on inadequacy of classroom performance.

A. The governing board of any school district shall give any certificated teacher who has not been employed by the school district for more than the major portion of three consecutive school years notice of intention to dismiss or not to reemploy if such intention is based on charges of inadequacy of classroom performance as

<sup>21</sup> [HB 2011 Laws 2009 3rd SS ch12](#)

defined by the governing board pursuant to section 15-539, subsection D. The governing board, or its authorized representative, shall, at least ninety days prior to such notice, give the teacher written preliminary notice of his inadequacy, specifying the nature thereof with such particularity as to furnish the teacher an opportunity to correct his inadequacies and overcome the grounds for such charge. The governing board may delegate to employees of the governing board the general authority to issue preliminary notices of inadequacy of classroom performance to teachers pursuant to this section without the need for prior approval of each notice by the governing board. In all cases in which an employee of the governing board issues a preliminary notice of inadequacy of classroom performance without prior approval by the governing board, the employee shall report its issuance to the governing board within five school days. The written notice of intention to dismiss or not to reemploy shall include a copy of any evaluation pertinent to the charges made and filed with the governing board.

B. If the preliminary notice required in subsection A of this section is issued as a result of an intention to dismiss, such preliminary notice shall be given at least ninety days prior to service of notice of the intention to dismiss. If the preliminary notice is issued as a result of an intention not to reemploy, such preliminary notice shall be given no later than January 15.

HB 2823 addresses and clarifies numerous school district personnel statutes including educator supports, contracts, notifications, transfer and dismissal policies.

**Table 3A.4: Crosswalk of 3Aiii (a-f) Elements with Arizona law, State Rules and Policy for Educator Evaluation System**

	Legislation	State Board Rule / ADE Policy	State Board Adopted Framework
Will be used for continual improvement of instruction?	A.R.S §15-203(A)(38)	AAC R7-2-602(F), (G)	Page 1
Meaningfully differentiate performance using at least three performance levels?	A.R.S §15-203(A)(38)	ADE letter <sup>22</sup>	<del>To be clarified</del> Page 9
Use multiple valid measures in determining performance levels, inc. as a significant factor data on student growth for all students (inc. ELs and students with disabilities), and other measures of professional practice (which may be gathered through multiple formats and sources, such as observations based on rigorous teacher performance standards, teacher portfolios, and student and parent	A.R.S §15-203(A)(38)	N/A	Pages 9-13

<sup>22</sup> [LEA Communiqué September 2011](#)

surveys)?			
Evaluate teachers and principals on a regular basis?	A.R.S §15-203(A)(38)	N/A	Page 3
Provide clear, timely, and useful feedback, including feedback that identifies needs and guides professional development?	A.R.S §15-203(A)(38)	AAC R7-2-602(F), (G)	Page 1
Will be used to inform personnel decisions?	A.R.S §15-537, 15-538, 15-539(C), 15-203(A)(38)	N/A	Page 3

### 3.B ENSURE LEAs IMPLEMENT TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

- 3.B Provide the SEA’s process for ensuring that each LEA develops, adopts, pilots, and implements, with the involvement of teachers and principals, including mechanisms to review, revise, and improve, high-quality teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with the SEA’s adopted guidelines.

***3.B. Is the SEA’s process for ensuring that each LEA develops, adopts, pilots, and implements, with the involvement of teachers and principals, evaluation and support systems consistent with the SEA’s adopted guidelines likely to lead to high-quality local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems?***

***Does the SEA have a process for reviewing and approving an LEA’s teacher and principal evaluation and support systems to ensure that they are consistent with the SEA’s guidelines and will result in the successful implementation of such systems?***

Although maximum flexibility has been given to the LEAs to develop their own teacher and principal evaluation systems, legislative intent is clear that these systems must align to all components of the Framework as set forth by the State Board of Education. The Framework does recommend that ADE “ensure review of the Framework and implementation with LEAs that are in Corrective Action or are identified as “persistently low achieving,” (See page 32 of Attachment 3-10).

At the end of the 2013-2014 school year, ADE ~~will require~~ **required** LEAs to sign a statement of assurance that their evaluation systems align with the revised Framework adopted by the SBE in May 2013 that includes the requirements of ESEA Flexibility.

In its work to ensure all students have access to effective teachers and leaders, the Effective Teachers and Leaders (ETL) unit at ADE has developed a “Fast Fact” sheet for each LEA (See Attachment 3B.1: Sample Fast Fact). This document presents 95 pieces of principal, teacher and student data on one page so that LEA teams have a simple snapshot of data to use as they work to ensure the equitable distribution of effective teachers and leaders within their LEA. The ETL unit also uses this information each year as it prioritizes and targets LEAs for which to provide technical assistance and monitoring. The Fast Fact document will be revised to include the performance levels of the principals and teachers as additional data to be used both by the LEA and the ETL unit.

WestEd’s REL evaluation of the optional statewide model project will inform ADE on the LEAs’ fidelity of implementation of the Framework and/or the optional Model. Data gleaned from the pilot project will be triangulated with data regarding the performance levels of teachers and principals as well as the LEA’s A-F Letter Grade, which is based on student academic achievement. The results from these analyses will be used to provide additional, focused technical assistance and support on a yearly basis. The evaluation will also help to identify exemplary implementation practices using the optional state principal and teacher evaluation models. This information will then be made available to other LEAs for them to incorporate into their own evaluation systems, where appropriate. WestEd will specifically review the data of LEAs using various weighting of student growth to determine how each is sufficiently differentiating among

teachers. ADE ~~will share~~ shared this report and data with USED as requested in the September 2013 letter.

Another recommendation of the Framework is that ADE, “Develop an Advisory Committee to review the effectiveness of the teacher and principal evaluation framework that is approved by the State Board of Education. The findings and recommendations of this committee should be reported to the State Board of Education for its consideration.” The Highly Effective Teachers and Leaders (HETL) Division at ADE ~~will~~ facilitates the work of this Advisory Committee. The Effective Teachers and Leaders Unit (housed within the HETL Division) ~~will~~ briefs the committee on the technical assistance provided to LEAs and the results of monitoring implementation for LEAs that are in Corrective Action, ~~soon~~ known as Priority Schools, or are identified as “persistently low achieving”. This information ~~will be~~ is included in the Advisory Committee’s report to the State Board of Education.

***Does the SEA have a process for ensuring that an LEA develops, adopts, pilots, and implements its teacher and principal evaluation and support systems with the involvement of teachers and principals?***

- **Process for ensuring that LEAs develop and implements its teacher and principal evaluation and support systems**

ADE has been striving to support LEAs to develop and implement teacher and principal evaluation and support systems within the timeframe defined in A.R.S §15-203(A)(38) through the following venues:

- **2011-2012 LEA Improvement Plans and Grant Applications:**

Even though the Flexibility Request will change the reporting requirements for LEAs, ADE has ~~been~~ proactively ~~using~~ used the Improvement Plans, which all LEAs must complete for Title IIA monies, to influence LEA development and implementation of its teacher and principal evaluation and support systems during the current year. In current LEA Improvement Plans, LEAs must include strategies and action steps for implementation of teacher and principal evaluation systems aligned to the Arizona Framework for Evaluating Educator Effectiveness.<sup>23</sup>

“Goal Title: Equitable Distribution of Effective Teachers and Principals

By 2013, provide all students with access to effective teachers and principals through equitable distribution and high quality professional learning opportunities in order to close the achievement gaps.

*\*\*Planning for Goal #2 should be developed across a three year span beginning with the 2010-2011 school year\*\**

Required Strategies (The LEA must address each of the required strategies below with a minimum of two action steps)

#### **Strategy #5- Implementation of the Teacher/Principal Evaluation Framework**

The LEA has a plan in place that ensures implementation of the Arizona Framework for Measuring Educator Effectiveness (teacher and principal) no later

<sup>23</sup> [2011–2012 Arizona Guidance for Title II](#)



than the 2012-2013 school year.”

Furthermore for LEA applications of Title IIA, funds may include expenditures to support these goals<sup>24</sup>.

“Expenditure Guidance:

- Hire a qualified external consultant to facilitate the development and/or revision of the Local Education Agency’s (LEA) teacher and principal evaluation system (tools and processes) in alignment with the State Board adopted teaching and leadership standards and the Arizona Framework for Measuring Educator Effectiveness. A Scope of Work must be provided for approval.
- Provide stipends to certified staff to participate in collaborative activities to develop/revise the LEA’s evaluation system (tools and processes) in alignment with the State Board adopted teaching and leadership standards and the Arizona Framework for Measuring Educator Effectiveness. To be eligible for stipends, these activities must be conducted outside the normal contract day.
- Pay allowable costs associated with participation in a consortium of LEAs to develop an evaluation system (tools and processes) in alignment with the State Board adopted teaching and leadership standards and the Arizona Framework for Measuring Educator Effectiveness.
- Pay allowable costs associated with participation in a national organization to design valid and reliable assessment tools for non-tested subject areas/grades.
- Provide professional development (on awareness and implementation) to certified staff on the aligned LEA evaluation system (tools and processes).
- Provide initial and on-going professional development for evaluators on the aligned LEA evaluation system (tools and processes) to ensure fidelity of implementation and inter-rater reliability.
- Design targeted LEA/school professional development based on analysis of teacher and principal evaluation data and in alignment with the National Staff Development Standards (NSDC).
- Design individual professional growth plans and targeted professional development based on analysis of individual teacher and principal evaluation data in alignment with NSDC.
- Evaluate and modify the evaluation system (tools and process), based on data, to ensure that it accurately assesses teacher and principal performance.

• **Educator Evaluation Summits:**

ADE, in cooperation with its partners, ~~is sponsoring three~~ **sponsored six** Summits to address the key components of Arizona’s framework. These Summits ~~will~~ assist LEAs in ~~developing a plan of action to align~~ **aligning** their teacher and principal evaluation systems to the Arizona Framework for Evaluating Educator Effectiveness ~~by the 2012-2013 school year.~~

**Summit I: *Using Multiple Measures in a Comprehensive System to Improve Teaching and Learning*, November 13 and 14, 2011**

The first Summit in the series provided an examination of the Framework and its expectations, an

<sup>24</sup> [Guidance- Title II-A Funding Use of Title II–A to Support the Development, Implementation, & Evaluation of Educator Evaluation Systems](#)



overview of the components of a comprehensive system, and examples of how multiple measures can be used in LEA evaluation designs. ~~Dr. Tricia Miller, the Director of the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (TQ Center) at Learning Point Associates, presented an overview of the *Practical Guide to Designing a Comprehensive System and Alternate Measures of Teacher Effectiveness*. LEA teams used this the information from this summit to a) assess the components and measures they had in place that align to the Framework, and b) develop a plan to bring their entire teacher and principal evaluation system into alignment.~~

**Summit II: *Using Student Performance Measures in a Comprehensive System to Improve Teaching and Learning*, February 26 and 27, 2012**

The second Summit in the series addressed the use of student performance measures in tested and non-tested subjects. The significant focus was on options for “Group B” teachers, non-tested subjects and special populations. ~~Dr. Laura Goe, from the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, presented information on Measuring Teachers' Contributions to Student Learning in the Non-Tested Subjects and Grades. Dr. Stanley Rabinowitz, Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center at WestEd, presented information on Making Measurement Decisions: Implications, Considerations and Cautions and Issues of Technical Adequacy in Measuring Student Growth for Educator Effectiveness. Additionally, members of LEA teams met in content area breakouts to share ideas and discuss approaches, strategies and options in identifying and/or developing student measures for Group A and Group B teachers and explore opportunities for collaborative work.~~ Each participant received a flash drive with pertinent resources to inform their work both at the Summit and back at their district or charter school including ~~One of those resources is~~ the National Comprehensive Center’s research and policy brief, *Challenges in Evaluating Special Education Teachers and English Language Learner Specialists*.

**Summit III: *Using Evaluation Data in a Comprehensive System to Improve Teaching and Learning*, April 29 and 30, 2012**

The third Summit in the series focused on the use of the data to a) inform professional development, b) make informed decisions regarding placement, advancement, incentives, etc., and c) provide evidence of the impact of the Framework on state, district, school and student outcomes.

**Summit IV: *Bridging Educator Evaluation with AzCCRS Implementation Teaching and Learning*, February 24 and 25, 2013**

~~The fourth Summit in the series focused on deepening the understanding between implementation of Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards and educator effectiveness initiatives.~~

**Summit V: *Supporting Principals as Instructional Leaders in the Observation Process*, February 9 and 10, 2014**

~~The fifth Summit in the series focused on integrating Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards and the work required of principals to positively impact their evaluation systems.~~

**Summit VI: *Comprehensive System to Improve Teaching and Learning*, March 1 and 2, 2015**

~~The sixth Summit in the series gave participants the opportunity to hear from national experts and reflect on the research, resources and various approaches to supporting school leaders in~~

implementing performance evaluations aligned to Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards

- **Process for ensuring teacher and principal involvement by the LEA**

ADE’s implementation of ESEA Section 2141C requirements supports the involvement of teachers and principals in the alignment of LEA teacher and principal evaluation systems to the Framework. LEAs in Section 2141C must include building-level administrators and teachers/teacher leaders on their committee to develop their grant application for Title IIA funds. ~~As stated before, all~~ All current LEA Improvement Plans must address their strategies for implementing their new teacher and principal evaluation systems ~~in as of~~ the 2012-2013 school year. Grant applications must align to these strategies.

Additionally, statute requires teachers to be involved in the development and evaluation of the teacher performance evaluation system of an LEA

A.R.S §15-537. Performance of certificated teachers; evaluation system

A. The governing board of a school district shall establish a system for the evaluation of the performance of certificated teachers in the school district. The objectives of the teacher performance evaluation system are to improve instruction and maintain instructional strengths. **The governing board shall involve its certificated teachers in the development and periodic evaluation of the teacher performance evaluation system.**

Membership of ~~the~~ Task Force that developed the Arizona Framework for Evaluating Educator Effectiveness included teachers and administrators from both district and charter schools. Furthermore, the President of the Arizona Education Association has agreed to chair the subcommittee on teacher evaluation for the development of the Statewide Teacher Evaluation Model. The subcommittee is comprised of practitioners and ADE staff. The subcommittee on principal evaluation is chaired by the Executive Director of the Arizona School Administrators Association and the subcommittee membership similarly consists of practitioners.

~~Attachment 3B.2 outlines a schedule of past and future of important stakeholder events demonstrating ADE’s commitment to not only seeking input but the department’s desire to help support the implementation of this critical initiative. This attachment compliments the schedule of outreach activities delineated in the Consultation section.~~

While the peer reviewers found Arizona’s Flexibility Request to meet the necessary requirements, the technical assistance suggestions provided proved helpful to the state’s process and aligned with the plans that had already begun. The project ~~has been~~ was extended for a year through 2014 and an LEA Readiness Survey was conducted to gauge their technical training needs and how ADE can better serve LEAs.

*Did the SEA describe the process it will use to ensure that all measures used in an LEA’s evaluation and support systems are valid, meaning measures that are clearly related to increasing student academic achievement and school performance, and are implemented in a consistent and high-quality manner across schools within an LEA?*

ADE ~~will include~~ submitted a recommended process for LEAs to identify multiple valid and reliable measures of student academic progress Group A teachers, Group B teachers, and

principals (See Attachment 3A.1: 2.0 Plan of Action for Development of Statewide Teacher and Principal Evaluation Model).

A cross-divisional Assessment Team ~~has also been~~ was established to provide resources and models that support the development of valid and reliable assessments and other performance measures, tied to both Group A and Group B teachers as well as ELLs and students with disabilities. This ADE cross-divisional team co-facilitated the LEA working sessions tied to these assessment topics at ADE’s Second Educator Evaluation Summit on February 26-~~&~~27, 2012.<sup>25</sup>

~~Summit II focused on LEA teams of both Group A and Group B teachers, including those who teach ELLs and students with disabilities (Reference Working Session II on February 27 from above Summit agenda).~~

The ADE ~~will~~ monitors district implementation of local evaluation systems by collecting data. This data ~~will~~ includes information about the number of educators assigned to each performance evaluation rating, retention rating, and student performance outcomes correlated to performance evaluation ratings at the school and LEA level. ADE may integrate information about evaluation systems into accountability and improvement efforts, including, if applicable, the school and LEA performance reports, and may incorporate monitoring data into the school and LEA consolidated improvement plans.

Additionally, ~~the~~ ADE is partnering with WestEd to build the capacity of the Regional Education Centers to assist in these processes. In the spirit of continuous improvement, WestEd and its Regional Education Laboratory (REL) ~~will also be~~ conducting an extensive evaluation of the implementation of both Arizona’s Framework for Evaluating Educator Effectiveness and the State Teacher and Principal Evaluation Model.<sup>26</sup>

***Does the SEA have a process for ensuring that teachers working with special populations of students, such as students with disabilities and English Learners, are included in the LEA’s teacher and principal evaluation and support systems?***

With the revised teacher evaluation requirements, ~~the~~ ADE ~~has~~ developed a framework for LEAs to use to develop the evaluation process for Group A teachers (teachers who teach the primary core curriculum) and Group B teachers (teachers who support the core curriculum). For example, teachers of students with disabilities (special education teachers) could fall into either of these two groups, depending on the model used for instruction for students with disabilities. For example, if a special education teacher is co teaching in a language arts and/or mathematics class or is the primary teacher for language arts and/or mathematics, then that special education teacher would be evaluated as part of the Group A teachers. If a special education teacher was supporting the reading and mathematics curriculum and not the primary content area teacher for students with disabilities, then they would be evaluated as part of the Group B teachers.

***Is the SEA’s plan likely to be successful in ensuring that LEAs meet the timeline requirements by either (1) piloting evaluation and support systems no later than the 2013-***

<sup>25</sup> [Summit II Agenda](#)

<sup>26</sup> The scope of work for the processes and protocols for approving new projects has not yet been set by Institute of Education Sciences (IES)

***2014 school year and implementing evaluation and support systems consistent with the requirements described above no later than the 2014-2015 school year; or (2) implementing these systems no later than the 2013-2014 school year?***

Arizona has been forging ahead with evaluation reform since 2010 knowing that too many students were languishing in struggling schools while too many teachers received “satisfactory” evaluations. While other states have chosen a path of waiting for lengthy pilots and assessment development prior to the development of educator evaluation and support systems, Arizona ~~has already~~ passed two key pieces of legislation, a State Board adopted framework and ~~begun over a year of implemented~~ many opportunities for training and outreach.

Arizona’s implementation plan ~~exceeds~~ exceeded the timeline requirement by a year. The State Teacher and Principal Evaluation Model ~~is being~~ was implemented in the 2014 school year (See Attachment 3A.1: 2.0 Plan of Action for Development of Statewide Teacher and Principal Evaluation Model). This Action Plan has been revised to align with HB 2823. The pilot ~~will be~~ is comprised of a number of school districts and charter schools that, as a whole, ~~will be~~ are representative of the student population.

Statute requires all LEAs to implement new evaluation systems beginning in school year 2012-2013; however, HB 2823 made some allowances. ~~Statute now allows school~~ School districts or charter schools ~~to may have~~ elected to postpone full implementation of the teacher/principal evaluation until school year 2013-2014 if the governing board ~~adopts~~ adopted a plan that ~~includes~~ included a detailed timeline, a plan to engage teachers and other stakeholders and how evaluations ~~will~~ would guide professional development, and ultimately the instrument to be considered.

**Arizona Revised Statute § 15-203(A)(38):**

*“The State Board of Education shall... ”on or before December 15, 2011 adopt and maintain a model framework for a teacher and principal evaluation instrument that includes quantitative data on student academic progress that accounts for between thirty-three percent and fifty per cent of the evaluation outcomes and best practices for professional development and evaluator training. School districts and charter schools shall use an instrument that meets the data requirements established by the State Board of Education to annually evaluate individual teachers and principals beginning in school year 2012-2013.”*

***Is the SEA plan for providing adequate guidance and other technical assistance to LEAs in developing and implementing teacher and principal evaluation and support systems likely to lead to successful implementation?***

The Implementation Timeline and Milestones, Table 3.1, demonstrate some of the key events that ADE ~~will be providing~~ achieved in order to support local LEA implementation.

***Is the SEA plan for providing adequate guidance and other technical assistance to LEAs in developing and implementing teacher and principal evaluation and support systems likely to lead to successful implementation?***

ADE is committed to providing LEAs with the guidance and technical assistance necessary for successful implementation of the Arizona Framework for Evaluating Educator Effectiveness.

This is being done by the following:

- Awareness Communication and Trainings, which have been ongoing since the adoption

of the Framework in April, 2011. Awareness Trainings have been conducted in LEAs, counties, conferences and for various associations.<sup>27</sup>

- Summits ~~I, II, and III~~ I-VI. The LEAs who have participated in all ~~three~~ six summits ~~left with an action plan~~ received information to adjust and implement their teacher/principal evaluation system aligned to the Framework ~~in the 2012-2013 school year~~.
- A Teacher Principal Evaluation webpage has been developed and is updated on a regular basis. This website includes links to resources for each component of the Framework.<sup>28</sup>
- An inbox has been created, [educatorevaluation@azed.gov](mailto:educatorevaluation@azed.gov). This is a vehicle by which constituents may get their questions answered quickly and consistently.
- A press release was sent to all LEAs and media.<sup>29</sup>
- A Fact Sheet has been sent to all LEAs and is available on the Teacher Principal Evaluation webpage<sup>30</sup>.

***Is the pilot broad enough to gain sufficient feedback from a variety of types of educators, schools, and classrooms to inform full implementation of the LEA's evaluation and support system?***

The ADE State Teacher and Principal Evaluation Model, which is currently being designed with key stakeholders, ~~will be~~ was piloted during the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years (See Attachment 3A.1: 2.0 Plan of Action for Development of Statewide Teacher and Principal Evaluation Model). ~~Feedback was gathered from a variety of content educators and school and district leaders that will assist with the modification and implementation of each LEA's chosen evaluation model.~~

<sup>27</sup> [State Awareness Presentation](#)

<sup>28</sup> [Teacher / Principal Evaluation webpage](#)

<sup>29</sup> [Teacher and Principal Evaluation Press Release](#)

<sup>30</sup> [Teacher and Principal Evaluation Fact Sheet](#)

## PRINCIPLE 4: REDUCING DUPLICATION AND UNNECESSARY BURDEN

In order to provide an environment in which schools and LEAs have the flexibility to focus on what's best for students, an SEA should remove duplicative and burdensome reporting requirements that have little or no impact on student outcomes. To receive the flexibility, an SEA must assure that it will evaluate and, based on that evaluation, revise its own administrative requirements to reduce duplication and unnecessary burden on LEAs and schools.

Improving efficiency and customer service ~~is has been~~ a top priority of ~~Superintendent Huppenthal since taking office at~~ the Arizona Department of Education (ADE). This is evidenced by the incorporation of ambitious customer service and process efficiency and effectiveness goals, objectives and measures in the ADE Strategic Plan.<sup>31</sup>

In order to improve in a way that is meaningful to LEAs and other stakeholders, in May 2011 ADE conducted the first of what will now be an annual *External Customer Satisfaction Survey*. Feedback was used to develop process improvement, customer satisfaction, and student achievement goals and objectives.

Based on external feedback, the second annual *External Customer Satisfaction Survey* was revised to minimize and/or eliminate unnecessary duplication and time required of LEA staff to provide their feedback. An added benefit is that more specific feedback will be provided to the ADE which will be translated into the next fiscal year's goals, objectives and performance measures.

ADE ~~has~~ identified key areas for improvement in how the agency does business based on the customer feedback from these surveys. Significant improvements are under way regarding the ADE's automated grants management system. The Grants Management Unit ~~has undertaken, completed,~~ along with a contractor, a ~~complete~~ review of ~~current~~ processes and procedures. This review identified seven key processes for ~~continuous~~ improvement:

- 1) Identification of Grant Funds;
- 2) Determining Eligibility of Grantees;
- 3) Grantees Applying to SEA for Funds;
- 4) Review of Grantee Applications;
- 5) Management and Disbursement of Grant Funds;
- 6) Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluating Grant Programs; and,
- 7) Closeout of Grant Programs.

Within each of these areas are multiple sub-processes that have been documented and analyzed, and will be the focus of targeted process improvement across the agency. The key objectives of process improvements related to grants management are to:

- 1) Standardize common processes across grant programs;
- 2) Standardize criteria and service to applicants and grantees;
- 3) Reduce workflow time for common procedures (such as disbursement);

<sup>31</sup> [ADE Five Year Strategic Plan](#)



- 4) Increase grantee knowledge around ADE processes for grants management; and,
- 5) Reduce inconsistency in requirements across programs, when possible.

The Grants Management Unit ~~will take~~ continues to take the lead on these targeted process improvements, while working collaboratively with staff from all grants programs and incorporating IT assets into processes when it will help alleviate administrative burden.

One of the benefits already identified with this process is the implementation of an improved system for interfacing with the State's accounting system. This new interface ~~will allow~~ the ADE to reduce the time it currently takes to disburse payments to schools/districts from 45 days to 5 working days. ~~Currently, the ADE requires LEAs to request payments through a cash management system that can result in a delay of up to 45 days from the time a grantee requests a payment until the ADE issues a warrant.~~ With the new system, ADE ~~will be~~ has been able to issue multiple checks to LEAs in a single month in as few as 5 days. This change alone ~~will be expected~~ to eliminate multiple audit findings over excess cash on hand and allow the LEAs to operate more efficiently.

This is just one example of how the Department's commitment to continuous evaluation and improvement will result in the lessening of burdensome requirements for Arizona's LEAs. In keeping with the ~~Superintendent's~~ long-term commitment to customer service, the Department's annual Strategic Plan and its longer term Five-Year Plan ~~also~~ contain the following goals ~~with and~~ objectives ~~in the following Key Result Area (KRA), which is one of five Key Result Areas featured in the Strategic Plan that~~ address issues of ineffective systems:

### Enhance Process Efficiency and Effectiveness

ADE recognizes the importance of a systematic approach to design, deliver and evaluate services and products that add value from a customer perspective. To that end, ADE has made an organizational commitment to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of processes and procedures. ADE's approach will include cross-functional and unit/program-specific improvements that are linked to customer requirements. As a result of this focus, significant improvements are expected in the student accountability systems, grants management system and cross-functional communication and collaboration.

#### Goals:

1. Develop and implement a new and improved Student Accountability and Information System (SAIS) that meets the needs of schools, students, parents and ADE by July 1, ~~2014-2015~~;
2. ~~Develop and Continue to~~ implement a comprehensive grants management system to eliminate redundancies in unit operations, increase customer satisfaction with grants processes and effectively manage federal and state grant funds ~~by December 31, 2012~~;
3. ~~Collaborate with ADE stakeholders to develop a financial framework that assists LEAs in leveraging their budgets to maximize impact on student achievement beginning in FY2013.~~
- 4.3. Increase efficiency through the implementation of an on-line teacher certification system by ~~June 30, 2012~~ October, 2015
- 4 Complete 95% of reimbursement requests within 5 working days
- 5 Pilot the new State Opt-In Student Information System in at least 6 LEAs in FY 15 school year.

### Consultation and Outreach



ADE recognizes that historically many of the agency’s federally funded programs have evolved into separate divisions, or silos, when providing compliance guidance and technical assistance to LEAs. The result has been to layer the requirements for reporting, planning and documentation on the LEAs, producing several, sometimes disjointed, plans for school improvement. After many informational outreach meetings held throughout the state to gather feedback regarding Arizona’s ESEA Flexibility Request, it became clear that the ADE needed to do more to actualize the reduction of unnecessary administrative burdens for LEAs in Arizona.

The plan ADE has developed to address LEA concerns is a two-fold process. First, ADE will convene all divisions within the agency that require LEA annual improvement plans. The meeting will have one essential goal, and that is: *to create one comprehensive plan for LEAs which includes all federal and state compliance requirements* - while integrating the planning and implementation strategies needed to reach this goal. The effect will be to have LEAs understand that they really only need *one* integrated plan to improve their schools, while simultaneously reducing the unnecessary duplication that has arisen over the years.

Next, once that integrated document has been created, ADE will conduct a forum of all ADE division associate superintendents, and share the internally developed document with practitioners representing diverse student populations from across the state. This forum will offer LEAs the opportunity to provide meaningful feedback to the document and make suggestions for further improvement. In this manner, the product developed will be streamlined and integrated, while also meeting all compliance and reporting requirements for state and federal programs. More importantly, the plans developed thereafter by LEAs will reflect a true student-focus and ensure a comprehensive approach to meeting the unique individual needs of all students. This process will be further aided by ADE’s grants management reform efforts.

Utilizing this approach, ADE will be able to ensure that the unique needs of English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with special needs are addressed in an integrated fashion. Arizona’s diverse population of Native American, African American, Latino and Asian students will be addressed as part of a comprehensive school plan, with all available resources leveraged to accelerate their academic progress.

### Summary

~~Since Superintendent Huppenthal took office, he and his staff began the task of accelerating~~ The process of changing the ADE from a singular focus on either compliance, or technical assistance depending on the program, to a service organization ~~continues to evolve~~. The Department has been re-organized on a functional basis to help reduce duplication and overlap in performing functions and to help identify opportunities for further streamlining. ~~Simply put, he emphasized the need for all ADE employees to deliver “Knock your socks off service,” the purpose being to serve Arizona’s education community and ensure every student has access to an excellent education.~~ The ultimate outcome of converting to a service organization will be great schools, excellent teachers, and successful students.

In order to accomplish this, the ADE needed to identify what is important to measure, how to measure it and, because of limited resources, how the necessary changes would be implemented and prioritized. ADE believes the development of a meaningful strategic plan was a significant step towards meeting these goals. ADE’s strategic plan allows the agency to identify those areas

where process improvements will lead to the greatest returns and where existing processes can, and should, be improved and/or eliminated. The strategic plan allows for meaningful measurement at critical times, identifies needed changes as appropriate based on the reported outcomes and allows the implementation of improvements in a timely manner.